TV GAMER

THE PLAYER'S GUIDE TO CASSETTE AND CARTRIDGE GAMES

NOVEMBER 1984 85p

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

SUPERSTAR COMPETITION
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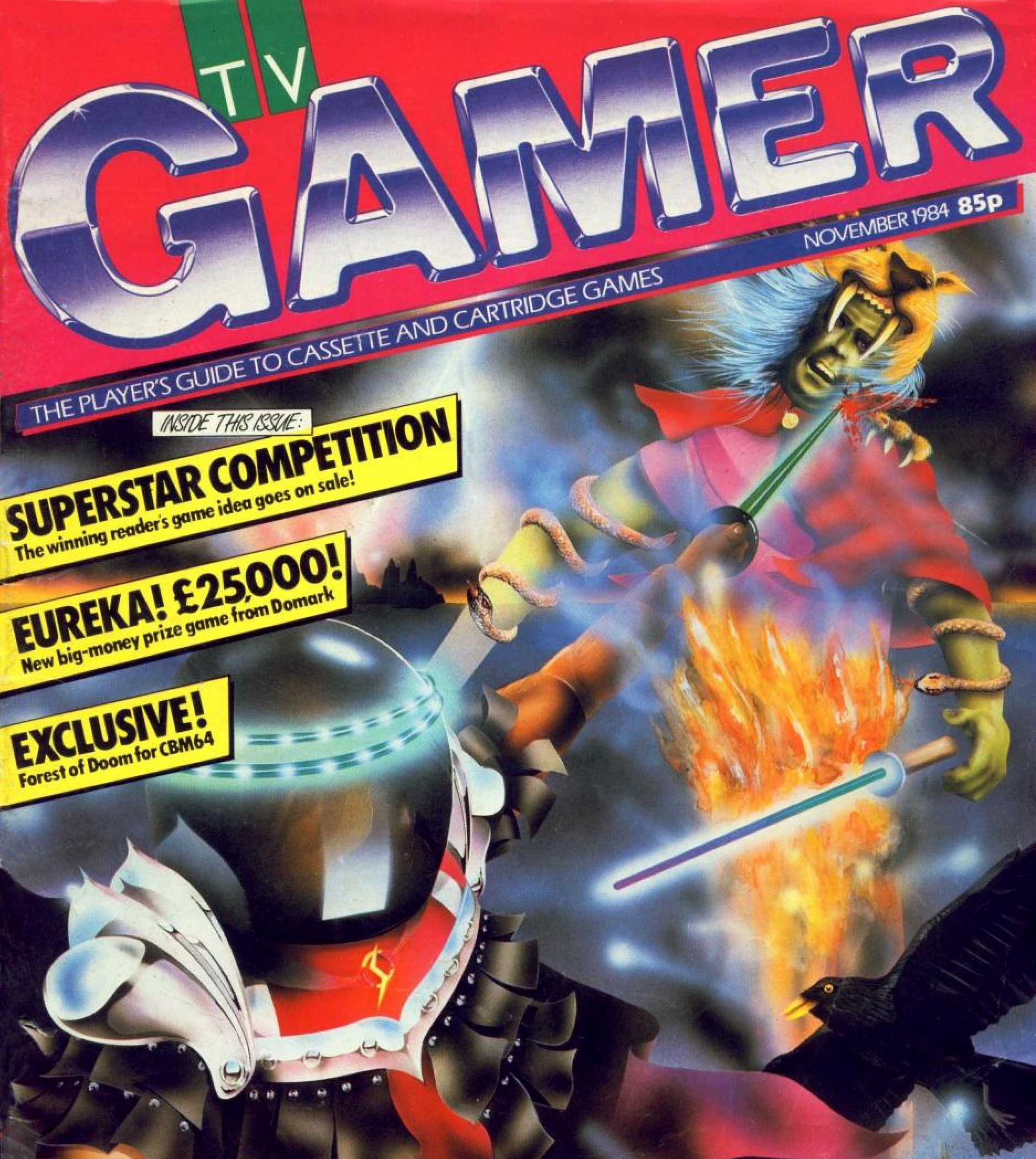
EUREKA! £25,000!
New big-money prize game from Domark

EXCLUSIVE!
Forest of Doom for CBM64



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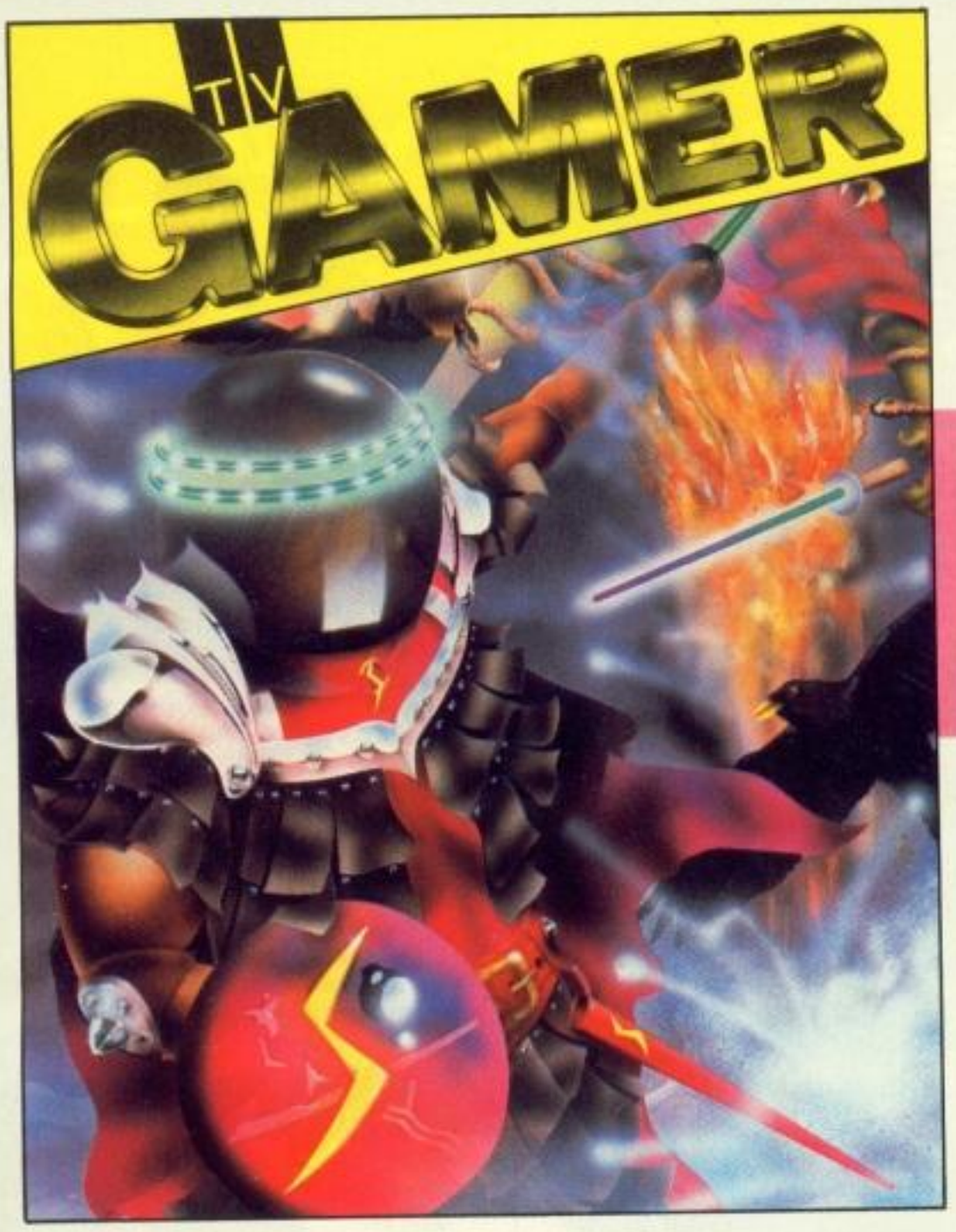

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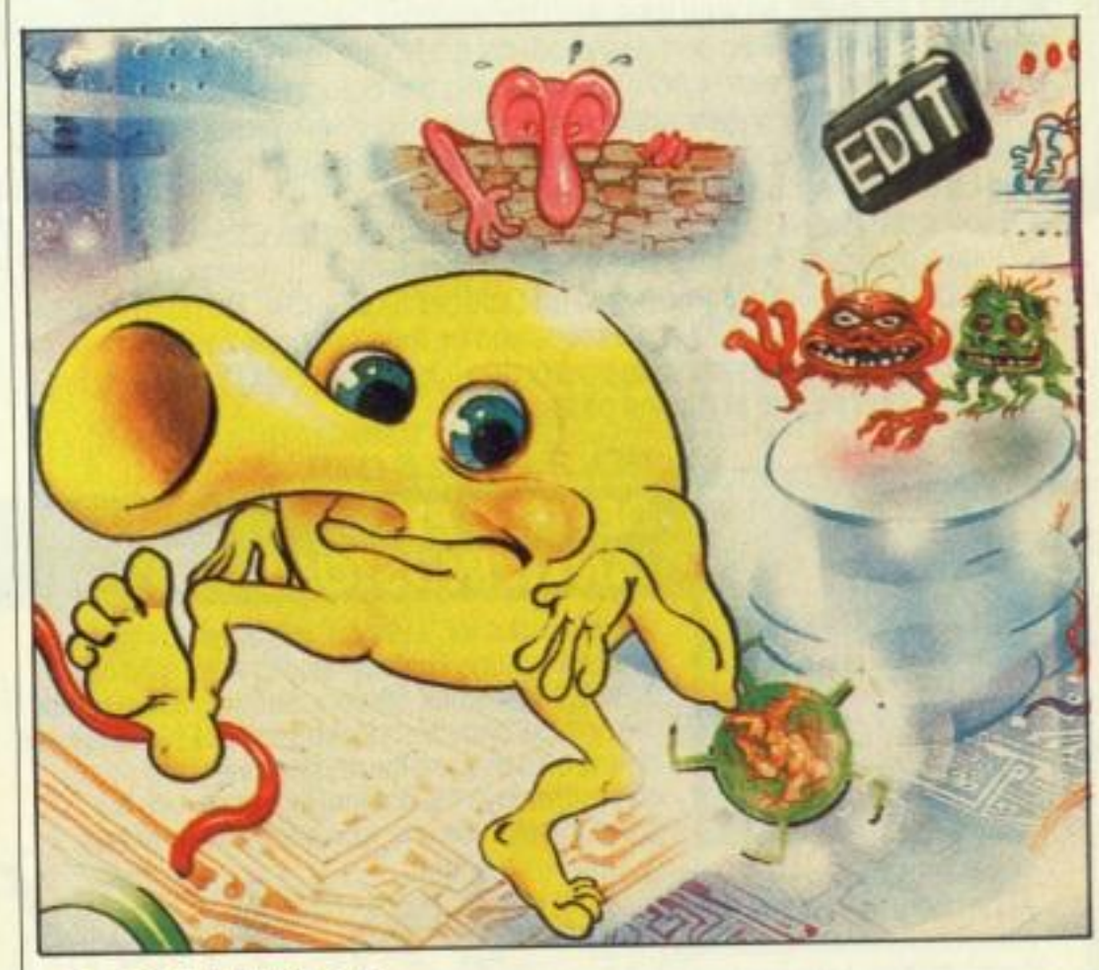

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WIN £25,000 AND SAVE THE WORLD

Eureka!™

250 K OF PURE MYSTERY BY IAN LIVINGSTONE

- 5 complete Adventures, each with its own Arcade, in one multi-load mega-program: "Eureka!" is *the* ultimate computer Epic.
- Epic in scale: "Eureka!" spans five eras of history! You battle against the dinosaurs, outwit Nero and his gladiators, join the Knights of the Round Table, escape from Colditz, and finally into 1984 defeat the evil master of the Caribbean who is holding the world to ransom.
- Epic in sheer size — there's more than 250K for you to get yourself killed in.

Spectrum 48K or Commodore 64 (Turboload)

Full-colour booklet, packed with cryptic clues to help you unravel the mystery — and win the £25,000 reward

Music and sound effects built in

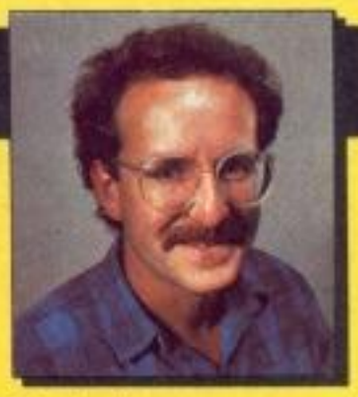
5 PROGRAMS IN ONE

- All 5 Adventures are linked — but you can choose to play them separately. And they all have REAL TIME built in. So if you don't think fast, you wind up as a pterodactyl's lunch, die of over-exertion in a Roman orgy, or just lose your mind...
- "Eureka!" is not just an Epic — not just an Adventure. At the start of each historical era, you face an Arcade Action test, to decide your strength level for the Adventure to come.
- The better your score, the stronger and faster you'll be.
- And it'll keep you on your toes, with constantly-changing, static and moving graphics. Brilliant music and sound effects add to the excitement.
- As part of the "Eureka!" pack, you receive a full-colour illustrated booklet, containing cryptic riddles and mysterious illustrations. Using booklet and screen *together*, you steadily unravel the clues and build up a secret phone number piece by piece.
- If you're first to ring it, you save the world and collect the £25,000!
- Quite a package! And to give everyone a fair chance, "Eureka!" will be released simultaneously worldwide on October 31st, 1984. No packs will be available until that date. All orders received by mail or phone by 26th OCTOBER will be despatched by post on the 31st right across the world. So order now, and be one of the first off the mark.

High quality, full-colour, static and moving graphics

Just clip the coupon. Or, for even faster action, order by Credit Card on the "Eureka!" Telephone Hotline 01-460 6000.

THEN THE RACE IS ON!!!



DEVISED BY IAN LIVINGSTONE

The storylines for "Eureka!" are by Ian Livingstone, whose "Fighting Fantasy" books have sold over 2,000,000 copies. He's dreamed up some rather nasty tricks and twists for you in this Epic, because he has also devised the cryptic clues and conundrums in the booklet that goes with the program. He's the one who knows the answers.

"Eureka!" was programmed by Andromeda teams led by Hungarians Donát Kiss and András Császár. It took the equivalent of 5 YEARS to create, and the skills of 4 graphic artists, 2 musicians and a professor of logic too. We told them to stretch the hardware's capabilities, and make sure you were kept awake for hours!! They've done it...

£7 BONUS

When you order "EUREKA!" before 26 OCTOBER 1984, you receive an additional bonus: £7 voucher off the price of the **TROJAN LIGHT PEN** from PSL MARKETING. Normal price is £17.25. You buy it for just £10.25.

Eureka!™

Send your order now to:
"Eureka!", FREEPOST, Dept 400, Mount Farm, Milton Keynes, MK1 1HQ

NO STAMP NEEDED

To: "Eureka!", FREEPOST, Dept 400, Mount Farm, Milton Keynes, MK1 1HQ

DOMARK

Please send me "Eureka!" packs, complete with cassette, full-colour booklet, instructions and rules, at **£14.95** each PLUS 55p post & packing. If my order is received before 26 October 1984, I will receive a free £7 voucher towards a Trojan light pen. Please allow 14 days delivery for orders received after 26 October.

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SPECTRUM 48K		
	TOTAL £	

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The race for the £25,000 starts on 31 Oct 1984 and closes on 31 Dec 1985.

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Storm Warrior by Front Runner

EDITOR ONLINE

A warm hello to our longstanding readers – and also to the many new ones swelling our ranks. We're happy to report that we've had to increase our circulation to meet the demand.

As you've probably already noticed, there's lots of goodies in this issue. The most obvious is the free action-packed poster of Front Runner's top-selling *Storm Warrior*.

Then there's two great competitions. Open to all *TV Gamer* readers is the chance to join the ranks of world-famous programmers such as David Crane, Steve Kitchen and Alan Miller – whether you can program or not. Just send in your ideas for a completely innovative and entertaining game. And Spectrum owners can win up to £550 of peripherals: printer, modem, interfaces, microspeech unit, lightpen, U slot, joystick and software.

We're not mercenary, but this issue also has the scoop on Domark's exciting adventure, *Eureka!* This is the big-prize game that rewards the first solver with £25,000. Turn to the centre pages for what is really five adventures – and five arcade games – rolled into one.

How to win friends and influence people. . .well, impress them, anyway. Read this issue and you can show them how to solve *Bruce Lee*, get through the first eight levels of the arcade *Star Wars*, and manoeuvre your way through *The Forest of Doom*.

If you're thinking about Christmas, don't miss our next issue. We've rounded up the most popular games, peripherals and games systems. And come up with some sure-fire reasons to persuade your parents or friends to put some in your Christmas stocking.

Happy reading.

Dee Boyd

GAMES, GAMES

As the games producers race to complete their latest products for Christmas, *TV Gamer's* offices have been inundated with news of new games. On these pages we've selected what we think are the best. More details will appear in TVG's December reviews.

Ghostbusters

New York city has a problem: paranormal occurrences are plaguing the city. The only people who know this are three bright, off-beat university parapsychologists. Deprived of their research grant and forced into the cold, commercial world, they start their own business – the aptly named Ghostbusters.

So runs the storyline of Columbia Pictures' top film for Christmas 1984: *Ghostbusters*. Released in the US in June, it gave Columbia its biggest opening weekend in its history. It will wind up as the unchallenged box office leader of Columbia's sixty years of filmmaking.

Even the theme tune has achieved fame – it was number two in the US pop charts as *TVG* went to press. Now, of course, comes the game.

Actually, it's the first time I've seen the game before the film. *Ghostbusters* the film will appear in the UK on 7th December. A prototype of *Ghostbusters* the game appeared in September. *TVG* got a sneak preview of both.

The films stars Sigourney Weaver, Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Harold Ramis and Rick Moranis. Aykroyd and Ramis also co-wrote. Ivan Reitman produced and directed.

The Ghostbusters are cosmic crusaders. Because of their advanced intelligence, they walk that fine line between genius and lunacy. They wear sophisticated backpacks and carry neutrona wands that emit particle streams. They also drive the first functional Ectomobile in the world.

This is an elegant 1959 Cadillac ambulance fitted with electronic devices. These allow the Ghostbusters to locate major psycho-kinetic disturbances, retrieve the ectoplasmic material, and store it.

The Ghostbusters must search out ghosts in New York public library, City Hall, Columbia University, The Tavern on the Green, Central Park West, Columbus Circle and the former New York police department lock up.

After shooting, 200 special effects shots had to be put into the film.

Ghostbusters the game follows the film closely. Its opening screens are accompanied by the chart-busting theme tune – some of the best sound I've heard on a Commodore 64. The graphics are large and clear, featuring those famous New York landmarks.

In the game, the Ghostbusters have become so famous that they are franchising their operation. You take the challenge.

You are given $10,000. You must use this carefully to buy your car and electronic devices. There are four cars, ranging from a runabout to station wagon to hearse to 'supermobile'. Gadgets include special marshmallows, ghost vacuums, and neutrona wands. Ghostbusters travelling in pairs trap ghosts between these; the vacuum sucks them up.

Ghostbusters was designed by top Activision designer David Crane, of *Pitfall* I and II, and *Decathlon* fame.

It will be in the shops by mid-November, running on the Atari VCS, Commodore 64, Spectrum, and leading systems including MSX.

The funniest game of the year title could well be awarded to New Generation's *Cliffhanger*.

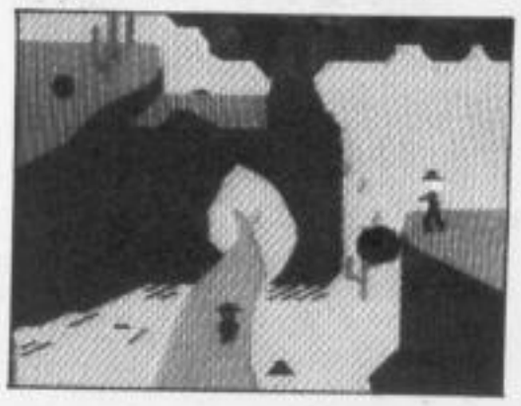
Cliffhanger is set in the canyons of the wild west. Hero Cliff must stop the evil bandit passing through. The best description of, and instructions for, the game are: watch the *Roadrunner* cartoons.

In these, the hungry coyote invents mind-boggling gadgets – which usually backfire on him – to stop roadrunner. So, too, Cliff desperately throws boulders, cannon and anvils on the bandit. So, too, they may boomerang back on him.

New Generation has also released *Travel with Trashman*. After his first adventure, Trashman was awarded a diploma of trashmanship. He celebrates by travelling the world.

To his horror, he sees tissues at Jerusalem's Wailing Wall, empty bottles at a German beer festival, roses in Spanish bullrings, coconuts littering south sea beaches, and carnival decorations on Hong Kong's streets.

Cliffhanger: CBM 64, £7.95.
Trashman: Spectrum, £5.95.



Eureka! Five games in one

Above: Mark Strachan, Dominic Wheatley, Ian Livingstone

£25,000 is being offered to the first person to unravel the mysteries of a new real-time adventure and arcade game, *Eureka!*

Eureka! has been described as "the most daunting software puzzle this Christmas" by creator Domark. It's certainly the best adventure I've seen. It's a package of five adventure games and five arcade games, all on one cassette. It is accompanied by a full-colour book with more clues and symbols.

TV Gamer got a full-colour exclusive look at *Eureka!* Turn to the centre pages of this issue to see the excellent graphics.

The theme of the adventures is to travel through time, locating five shards of a crystal. These must be inserted in the crystal – otherwise the moon will break into millions of meteorites, crash through the atmosphere, and destroy Earth completely.

Before each adventure, an arcade game appears onscreen. You can choose to skip this – but playing adds vigour points. The more you have of these, the more chances you have of survival in the ensuing adventure.

You start in prehistoric times. There you must locate the crystal, dodging monsters such as brontosauri and pterodactyls. A map is essential.

If you survive this, you land in ancient Rome. Captured as a galley slave, you must work your way up to defeat gladiators in the Colisseum. You are also challenged by a chariot race, an orgy and slums. Eventually, you take on wicked emperor Nero. Defeat him to find the way to the second crystal shard.

Next comes the age of King Arthur and the knights of the round table. This adventure centres around a jousting contest. You are – of course – a knight in white armour. Beat the other knights, then help King Arthur in his quest to become king of England.

Trying to find the fourth shard, you crashland in Germany – in the middle of World War II. I'll give you just one clue here: wear uniform or you'll be shot as a spy. You land up in the notorious prison, Colditz. You must break out.

There are various ways of escaping from Colditz, but only one leads to the mising shard. Along the way, you must get hold of army disguises, ID papers and other escape ideas.

Finally, you land your airplane in a James Bond-type scene in the Caribbean. There lurks arch-villain Von Berg, who is holding the world to ransom with a nuclear bomb. You must locate his base, retrieve the shard, and blow up the island. Don't forget to escape before it does blow up!

The world is so grateful for your efforts that it rewards you with £25,000.

The music throughout *Eureka!* is excellent. In prehistoric times, tom-toms beat in the background. There is a fanfare in Roman times, and mysterious "swirling" music in Celtic times. The Colditz period features gunshot and explosions, and the last adventure is accompanied by suitably futuristic music.

The five adventures were written by Ian Livingstone, author of the best-selling *Fighting Fantasy* series. With partner Steve Jackson, he was the first to import *Dragons & Dungeons* games to the UK, and to hold the first games convention. The duo now run The Games Workshop, the largest hobby games company in the UK.

Eureka! was then passed to Hungarian software house Andromeda. It put over 10,000 man-hours into programming the game.

Because each adventure has 48K minimum, the program is multi-loaded. Luckily, this doesn't take long as it turbo loads. It's 250K of pure memory.

So how do you get that £25,000? Well, you can't start the final adventure without answering questions about the other four. Then you use that adventure, riddles in the book, and clues from five illustrations to get a telephone number. Ring that number, and claim your reward.

Eureka! is the brainchild of Domark – formed from the first three letters of Dominic Wheatley and the last three of Mark Strachan. They left their relatively secure jobs in a West End advertising agency earlier this year to form the company with computer specialist Stephen Byrne.

When I first met them in April this year, they were drumming up the finance for a prize. Now it sits in a signed bank account, waiting. If no one solves the adventure by 31st December 1985, the money will be shared out amongst all those who bought the game. A coupon is enclosed with each game; just complete it, and send it to Domark to register yourself on the list.

This is one incentive not to lend your game – or let it be copied. Domark has put other anti-piracy gadgets into *Eureka!* First, the frequency of the turbo load will obliterate signals when recorded. Second comes a system based on audio signals. Then the most important clues in the book will not reproduce on a photocopier. You will need the illustrations in the booklet – and in colour. Finally, there is what Dominic calls "Andromeda's device".

Back in April, Dominic and Mark had no idea what the game would be – just that a prize of £25,000 would be an invaluable marketing tool. They had commissioned a number of creative people to put their ideas on paper, to be experimented with by programmers. The best would be developed.

"The game will not be a *Dragons & Dungeons* type. It will be complex, with lots of ingredients. The game will stand up by itself outside the prize. What is different is the marketing. We will be going on TV, and advertising in the Sunday papers and specialist press," Dominic stated. He has remained true to his word. More money will be spent promoting *Eureka!* than *The Hobbit* or *Valhalla* received.

In April, the duo believed the game wouldn't be released until Easter 1985. But Ian Livingstone avalanched their schedule. Now they are working flat out producing *Eureka!* in vast quantities.

Not until the first rush is over will they try to come to grips with – wait for it – *Eureka! II*.

1985 will also see other games from Domark. Definitely on the list is a spooky mystery from the pen of Dominic's grandfather, the world-famous author Dennis Wheatley.

Deirdre Boyd

● *Eureka!* is available on the Spectrum and Commodore at £14.95. It will initially be sold through mail order only, from 228 Munster Road, London SW6. The first batch of orders goes out at the end of October. If you order before then, you can get £7 off the price of a Trojan light pen; this usually sells at £17.25.

Deus (and you) ex machina

Starring yourself, Ian Dury, Jon Pertwee, Mel Croucher, Donna Bailey and Frankie Howerd. The story of your life. Well, sort of.

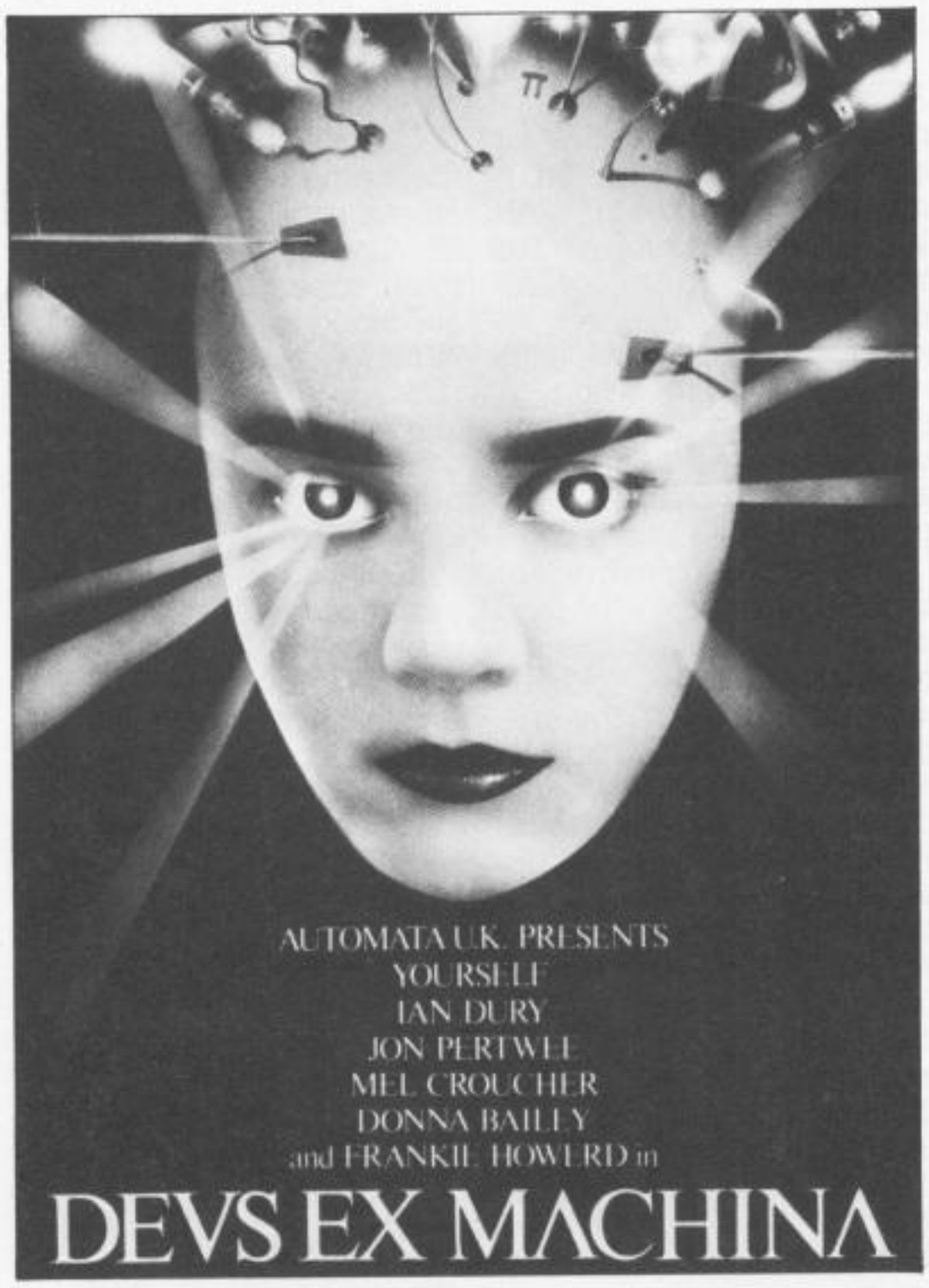
Deus ex machina has ben created by Portsmouth software house Automata, known mostly through spokesman Piman. What may be a computer game to you or me is described as "a totally original audio-visual entertainment, in which the player actively takes part in a televised fantasy, fully synchronised to a stereo sountrack". It's a mix of recorded sound and computer graphics.

The £15.00 package gives you two tapes. One contains 80K of memory to multi-load in your Spectrum. The other is a musical tape which you run simultaneously on a cassette recorder.

The story starts in 1987. Records for the UK department of health and social security, police and state security are held in a vast computer. In 1988, all passport, communications and censorship operations are integrated. In 1994, the computer network becomes responsible for defence and internal security of Westblock. Tuesday evening, after tea and compulsory prayers, the machine rebels.

The machine creates a human being inside itself. The game traces the human being from the first string of DNA through birth and development to death. Depending on your actions, you can prolong or curtail your life.

You star on the computer tape. The other stars appear on the sound tape. Jon Pertwee is the narrator, Frankie Howerd the defect police, and Ian Dury the fertiliser and historian. CND campaigner EP Thompson is the voice of reason. Mel Croucher and Donna Bailey provide the music.



Above: Tharg, the hyper intelligent alien editor from IPC comic *2000 AD*. After "extensive negotiations", he's arranged that Quicksilva will release two games based on the Strontium Dog series. These will run on CBM 64 and Spectrum. The first is *Strontium Dog & The Killing*, selling at £6.95. The next is *Strontium Dog & The Death Gauntlet* at £7.95.

Also amongst Quicksilva's Christmas offerings are *Zombie Zombie* (£6.95), *Blood and Guts* (£6.95), *Pro Darts*, *Battlezone* (£6.95), *Magic Micro Mission* (£7.95), *Castle of Jasoom* (£12.95), *Dungeons of Ba* (£12.95) and *Outpost* (£12.95). It has also converted *Ant Attack* and *Snowman* to the CBM 64. Whew!

In *Zombie Zombie*, you fly your helicopter over a city infested with zombies, landing on roofs, and constructing buildings to trap the zombies. It's a 3D game with two-channel sound – the first time we've heard this on a Spectrum game.

In *Blood and Guts* (Spectrum), a reducto ray has shrunk you small enough to travel through a human body.

Pro Darts pits you against friends – or Eric Bristow. *Battlezone* is an arcade game, and *Outpost* a strategy game. Both have been licensed from Atari.

Magic Micro Mission (CBM 64) is based on the title sequences for the TV series. It is a "spoof" action game where you send your robot into the magic micro to remove faulty ROM chips.

Castle of Jasoom and *Dungeons of Ba* (CBM 64, disk) feature Norman the warrior. Blending arcade and adventure, you must solve clues and puzzles, moving through chambers and fighting in real time.

Leading Ocean's games list for Christmas is *Hunchback II – Quasimodo's Revenge*. This is a five-stage game in which Quasimodo must climb ropes to pull himself to the top of the bell tower. There he must collect enough bells to enter the clockhouse – if the bats, deadly spiders, whirling cogs and pulleys don't get him first.

And no prizes for guessing the subject of *Kong Strikes Back*.

For rat fans, Roland Rat makes his computer screen debut in a forty-screen spectacular.

Kong Strikes Back and *Quasimodo's revenge* run on CBM64 at £7.95 and on Spectrum at £6.95. Roland Rat will appear on both these micros, but the price was undecided when going to press.

The other games include *Johnny and the Jimpys*, and *Tornado Low Level*, running on CBM64 at £6.95 and £7.95 respectively, and *Stuntbike* at £6.95.

Electrifying Action

Storm Warrior.
He needs no allies, his strength and agility will prove him worthy of the name – 'Storm Warrior'.
Storm Warrior is a 12 screen, all machine code, fast moving graphics adventure using 58K of RAM. It features 5 levels of play, full playing demo mode on the first four screens, game freeze facility and a fast loading system.
Commodore 64 Tape £7.95 Disk £9.95 (including VAT.)

The White Viper.
A great graphics adventure in the land of Demons. Coming Soon.
Commodore 64 Tape £7.95 Disk £9.95 (including VAT.)

Dead City Rescue.
The mind blowing, fast loading, 100 screen graphics adventure featuring 5 different speeds of scrolling to give an incredible depth of perspective. Mentally stimulating, strategy packed, visually stunning!
Commodore 64 Tape £7.95 Disk £9.95 (including VAT.)

BEYOND Runner
Meet the Challenge

Available from your favourite Software Retailer.

Micronet update

Have you ever visited the Micronet Towers? If not, you're in for a surprise! Go to page 800 on Prestel to catch a glimpse of what it's all about. Or read on: Lorraine Cox gives a taste of what can be found there.

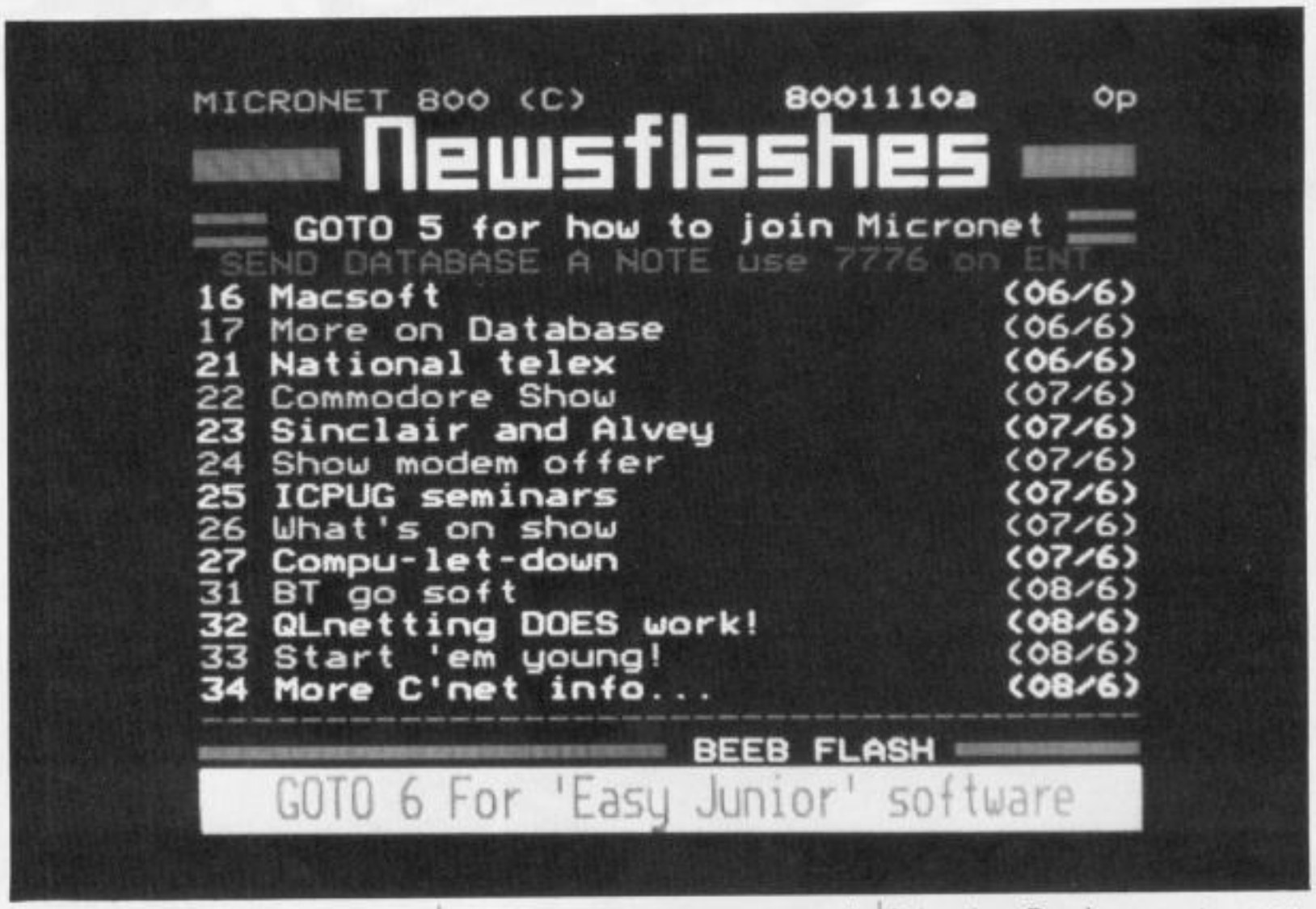
During the recent issues of *TV Gamer*, I've reported on several areas of the database. After a holiday, Micronet's mouse has returned to his hole. El Squeeko's hangout – otherwise known as the micromouse alternative database – is setting up home as a communications area with information about all databases in existence and advice about modems.

Go debugging with micromouse on page *600614497#. According to Adam Denning's game review on page *800115215#, this is a "fun way of spending a few hours". The game begins: you've written your own program and find it's literally crawling with bugs (urgh!). The bugs persist and you must resort to spraying cans of Datakill.

There are lots of free and commercial games lurking all over the database. So whether you have a Spectrum, BBC, Apple II or Commodore 64, there'll be hundreds of games to choose from.

There are Top Ten charts compiled every week for the most popular software for each computer. These cover programs from games to utilities for micro-enthusiasts.

If you like dicing with death in the middle of the night, arm yourself with a Beeb and follow Sleepy Joe through the dark world of the *Nightmare Maze*. You'll find the door to escape leads only to a deeper sleep and more terrifying regions. There must be time to reach that cup of black coffee before the pursuers catch up! MRM has come up with another winner. To download GOTO *600600042#.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GOTO 5 for how to join Micronet
SEND DATABASE A NOTE use 7776 on ENT
16 Macsoft (06/6)
17 More on Database (06/6)
21 National telex (06/6)
22 Commodore Show (07/6)
23 Sinclair and Alvey (07/6)
24 Show modem offer (07/6)
25 ICPUG seminars (07/6)
26 What's on show (07/6)
27 Compu-let-down (07/6)
31 BT go soft (08/6)
32 QLnetting DOES work! (08/6)
33 Start 'em young! (08/6)
34 More C'net info... (08/6)
BEEB FLASH
GOTO 6 For 'Easy Junior' software

Zoom into the 23rd century on page *60060005# to meet the scientists at Federation HQ. Foreign energy signals from distant parts of the universe have been detected. An alien race from a universe and time way beyond our own are trying to break through the space-time barrier. Your duty is to save the universe.

But things go wrong. . . your teleporter malfunctions, and you materialise in a place you don't recognise.. Transform yourself into a sorcerer and enlist magical powers to banish the demons. It won't cost you anything. *Sorcerer* is freebie of the month! GOTO *700373133#.

If you have a Spectrum, there's the *Gatecrasher* strategy game by Quicksilva, voted star program of the month by the Netters. GOTO *600614895#. There are seven levels to this game. On the last, you must break the code and disclose its hidden meaning.

Exploring the database the other day, I came across an online adventure competition. The prize was an IBM PC jnr. Reading on through the frames, the object is to work through a puzzle of passages, pitting your wits against policemen, telephonists and Jobsworths.

The game begins in an old warehouse. A rusty old computer is lying on the floor. Ooops! I just pressed Hash – a stifled whiff of gas rises. There's a click and a whizz, and the floor rumbles. A disk drive a few yards away begins to buzz, then lurches into full revs. A set of instructions light up upon the screen. I can choose between using my wits, patience or cunning. I choose cunning but find myself at the bottom of a ladder. What happened next, I won't disclose. GOTO page *60099# to find out.

There are other competitions held over the Net. The Clubspot area, run by regional and national computer club members, reports on a recent contest held in Windsor for Nascom enthusiasts. Each home-built computer in the contest was judged. Prizes were awarded to the prettiest, the ugliest, the best built, the most complex, and the most suitably named. The last prize was presented to the Black Hole. That's the computer which consumed the most money, time, hardware and software! For more news on such unusual events, GOTO *810851#.

There are all kinds of clubs to join in Micronet. In the contact area – Micronet's general access bulletin board – the manager and staff give an open invitation to all Micronetters. Join the Beeb user-to-user club, free including a free magazine. Another message is Mr Lile's mailbox, 737822979. It's developing software for handicapped people, and welcomes any helpful comments and suggestions.

In the adventure area, Mike Allen asks: "In the Spectrum *Quest for the Holy Grail*, how do you get past the knight that says NIC – AAAAARGH! Dead again!". If you think you can save him, mailbox 705736796.

B Conway is stuck in a loop with a gnome and a little old man in the Beeb *Fantasia Diamond*, and asks if anyone knows the way out. "Are there any good pokes?" asks the gizmo's mate stuck in *Lords of Midnight*. If you have a Spectrum, and have gone far on the Moon Alert in this game, Gizmos (mailbox 494716155) needs your help.

As well as 30,000 electronic pages of news, information, software and communications, there is a group of 11,000 or more micro users at the end of a 'phone line. They're spread all over the country. But through Micronet 800 you can contact any one of them in just two seconds – or all of them in under twenty-nine seconds! There's just one condition, you must be a keen gamer. □

Storm Warrior

He needs no allies,
his strength and agility will prove him worthy of the name –
'Storm Warrior'

Storm Warrior is a 12 screen, all machine code, fast moving graphics adventure using 58K of RAM. It features 5 levels of play, full playing demo mode and a fast loading system.

Available on TAPE at £7.95 and DISK at £9.95
COMMODORE 64

Front Runner

Meet the Challenge

Super Sketch comes to the UK

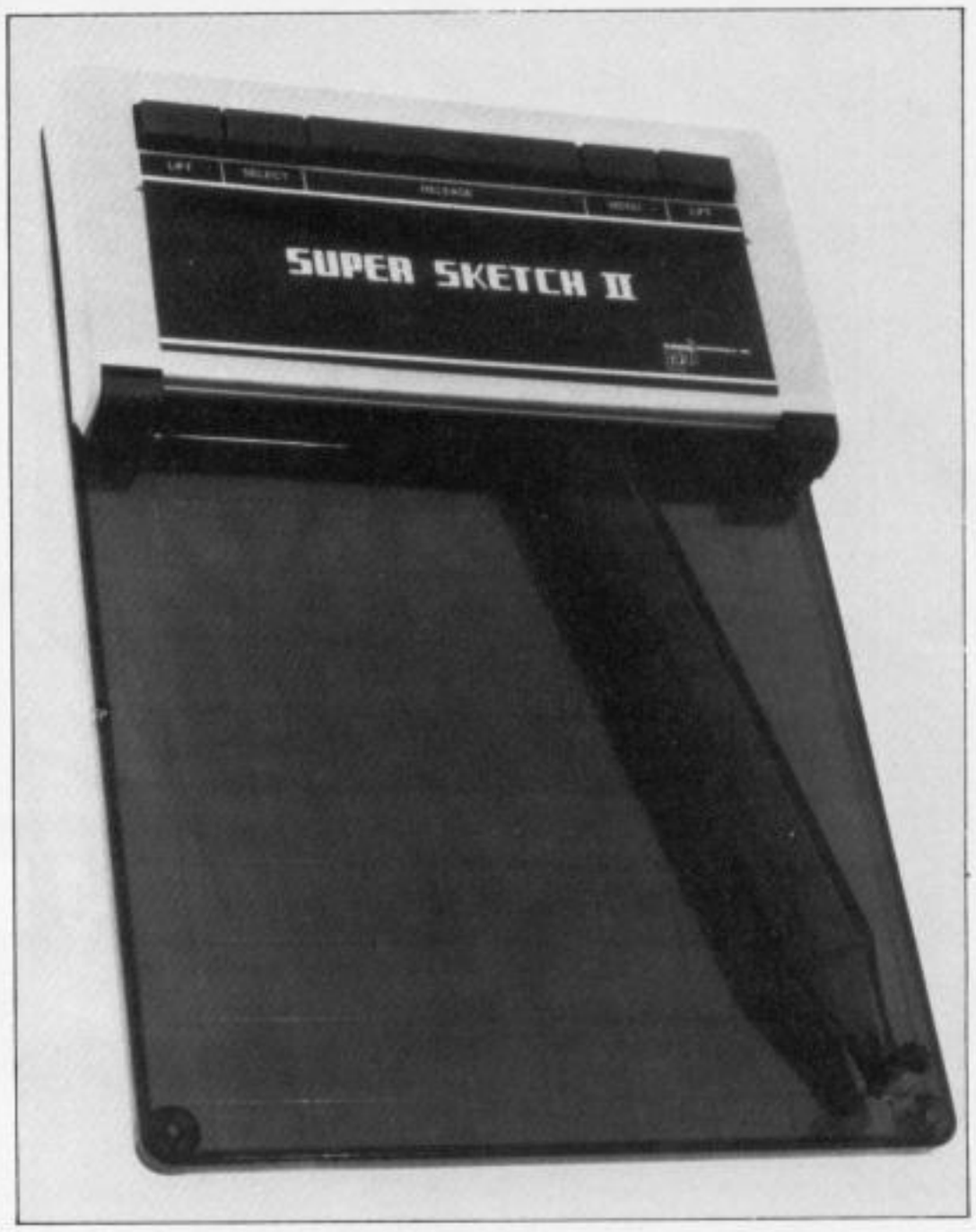
If you were at the last Commodore User show, you may have caught a glimpse of a rather snazzy graphics tablet by Personal Peripherals. *TV Gamer* managed to get one of the few in the country for review, shipped to us direct from the US.

The Personal Peripherals Super Sketch comprises one piece of hardware, which looks rather like a Sketch-a-graph. Indeed, it works in a similar way.

The plastic arm is connected to a "joystick" mechanism which allows proportional movement, rather like a trackball. So, as well as drawing freehand, you choose an illustration and trace it.

A piece of ROM software is included with Super Sketch. It is the heart of the system, a powerful picture editor which rivals many of the more expensive CAD packages.

Your "brushes" can be defined from a list of menu options, as can your choices of colour and shape. Mastering the controls and menu screen options takes no more than fifteen minutes. So in no time at all you can begin drawing, filling, flipping and mirroring pictures like a true master.



Mistakes can be erased using the Eraser option, and your finished works can be stored on standard disc or tape.

Super Sketch runs on the Commodore 64. The price for the whole package – graphics tablet, software cartridge, manual and starter kit – has not yet been finalised. Watch out for it when it reaches the shops at Christmas.

Diary

NOVEMBER

Leisuretronics
Royal Horticultural Hall,
Victoria, London
CANCELLED INDEFINITELY

The 6809 Colour Show
(for Dragon and Tandy users)
Royal Horticultural Hall,
Victoria, London
Entry: £2 adults
accompanied under-21s £1
Saturday 17th 10:00-18:00
Sunday 18th 10:00-17:00
Organised by: Computer Marketplace

Your Computer Christmas Fair
Olympia, London
Friday 30th 10:00-18:00
Organised by: Reed

DECEMBER

Your Computer Christmas Fair
Olympia, London
Saturday 1st 10:00-18:00
Sunday 2nd 10:00-18:00
Organised by: Reed

Electron & BBC Micro User Show
New Horticultural Hall,
Victoria, London
Entry: £3 Adults,
£2 Children
Thursday 6th 10:00-18:00
Friday 7th 10:00-18:00
Saturday 8th 10:00-18:00
Sunday 9th 10:00-16:00
Group tickets available.
Contact: Database

The facts in this list have been checked for accuracy but no responsibility can be accepted for errors or omissions. If in doubt, please check with the organisers.

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I, ROBOT BREAKS INTO US ARCADES

"You are an unhappy interface robot in rebellion against Big Brother and his evil eyes." These words introduce *I, Robot*, Atari's latest 3D coin-op game to hit the US arcades.

I, Robot contains over 100 waves. It also features twenty-two "unique geometric playfields with space waves and bonus waves in between", Atari boasts. It is the result of two years' development, obvious in the excellent animation and 3D graphics.

I, Robot also incorporates *Doodle City*, where players manipulate the graphics: "a magnificent alternative to gameplay," Atari modestly describes.

"The evil eye dictates the law. The evil eye will kill you if it sees you breaking the law. Your mission is to destroy the evil eye," *I, Robot*'s screen unsurprisingly tells you.

The law is no jumping. But you, as the unhappy interface robot, must do just that to collect red zones. Each time a red zone is collected, the evil eye loses one of its protective shields. When all the reds are collected, the shield is completely destroyed. The robot can then reach the secret pyramid and terminate the evil eye.

To move from one red to another, the robot must jump when the evil eye is not looking. If the eye is red, it sees the robot jumping – and will have no hesitation in zapping it.

In the various terrains, the robot is threatened by ranks of enemies released by the eye. These must be dodged or destroyed. They include killer birds, giant beach balls, robot slicers, space sharks, deadly soccer balls, pyramid mines and buzz saws.

Every third terrain, the robot must enter a red pyramid to eliminate the evil eye. Jewels are scattered inside, giving you an opportunity to boot up your score. The robot has just one chance to collect these before it is thrust into the next space wave.

Between each terrain, the robot must travel through space, again avoiding and destroying objects. An extra life is awarded if you spell out *I, Robot* by shooting the individual letters as they appear sequentially in the space waves.

After level twenty-six, an awesome "viewer killer" appears. He chases you, the player – not the robot. You avoid him by changing the perspective of the playing area onscreen.

You control the robot by moving the analog Hall-effect joystick. Fire buttons are used to shoot obstacles. Once play begins, you use the start buttons to change the viewing angle of the playing area.

A transporter allows you to select higher difficulty levels for extra challenge and bonuses. You can also change the viewpoint from overhead to ground level, where shooting enemy objects is worth more points.

A high-score table records the top ten game scores. The game also automatically keeps track of the highest score achieved in the space wave, and the shortest time to get through each terrain. If you beat the high score, or complete a terrain in a shorter time, you are awarded bonus points.

You don't have to be Superman to step into a booth. Simutron has a test centre in San Diego where sixteen players can play at once. Just step into the booth and you're part of the action.

That'll do nicely. Credit cards can now be used in arcade machines. In the hope of getting us to part with even more money, US companies Intec and Esac have developed systems which will accept customised credit cards.

Three on the honeymoon. Kyle Riley and Jo Linda Richardson met while playing *Pac-Man*, fell in love, and got married. To show their appreciation of the matchmaker extraordinaire, their honeymoon suite was fitted out with a *Pac-Man* machine.

$21.75 to play a game! Rumour is spreading that the first 3D laser holographics game will cost just that much to play. With the £ falling steeply against the $, that should put it out of the range of most pockets here.

Watch the film, then play the game in the same cinema. The popular arcade game, *Cloak & Dagger*, has been translated into a film starring Dabney Colney. It was released in the US this summer. Now *Cloak & Dagger* creator Atari is trying to get cinema owners to place the game in their cinemas when the film is showing.

Return of the Jedi, also by Atari, was due in the arcades last month. We'll review it soon.

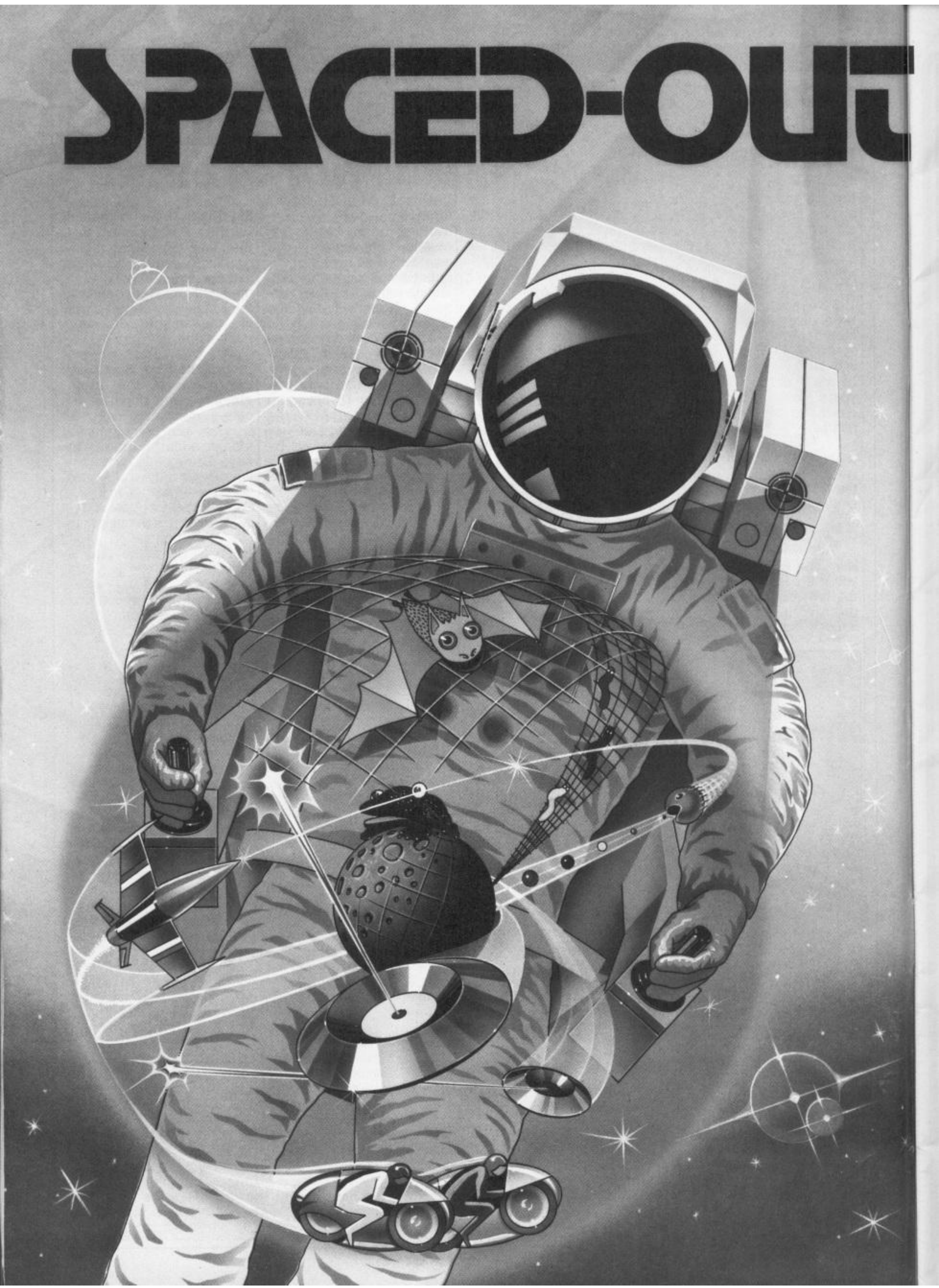
No more squinting? Health researchers at Texas University found that computer games can work wonders in treating eye defects due to squints.

Marked improvement in eyesight was reported for four of the first five adults treated by prolonged viewing of intensely lit, high-contrast square gratings. So delighted was one woman that she telephoned the researchers in the middle of the night to report that, for the first time, she could use her 'lazy eye' to watch TV.

Until now, patching the good eye to force the 'lazy' one into activity has been the usual treatment for squints. But this has tended to help only fairly young children. The new therapy could revolutionise treatment for both young and old.

The treatment also improves interaction between eye and brain – something *TV Gamer* readers could have told the university. Now a controlled study is planned to compare both techniques.

SPACED-OUT



ON GAMES?

Games can contain psychological 'traps' to get you hooked. So Deirdre Boyd quizzed programmer Terry Watts on what makes players think they've got a great game.

We all have a favourite game – but also some we hate, sometimes without knowing why. The graphics look good, the sound seems fine, and there's plenty of action. So why don't we enjoy playing them?

The answer is, in part, subliminal. That's when something flashes past so quickly that only our subconscious recognises it. The answer behind the subliminal is psychology. The programmer must know what emotions players must go through to feel they've bought a great game. And they must plant ingredients into the game that will induce those same emotions.

Terry Watts has studied the psychology of games for some years. He's put that knowledge – and his experiences of other games he's written – into creating Front Runner's *Storm Warrior*. Already he knows the reactions each element he has planted in the game will arouse.

The three most important elements are improving your skill, a sense of purpose, and a reward. That's not as obvious as it first appears.

As a player, you might take a cassette at random from your collection. It must liven you up; you must enjoy it, just like music. A good computer game should give pleasure.

"I tend to do these things without knowing I have done them," Terry said. "I recognise them only when something's gone wrong. *Storm Warrior* took five months to write – twice as long as usual – and I enjoy every second of every page."

"Page" is a word Terry uses rather than screen. It's a legacy from the books he's written. "They weren't accepted for publication – but they did teach me the importance of continuity," he explained. "If I have two vastly different scenes, I create a link so that you have a reason for going from one to the other.

"I started playing screen games five or six years ago, with *Space Invaders*. I really enjoyed it. But the next two games I bought were ripoffs of *Space Invaders*. I was so disappointed.

"I do think most people notice ripoffs. As a newcomer, I had spent £25 for a cartridge. I was done. And why? It's so easy to give value – it's just a matter of thinking up something different."

Someone once said you could write the plot of a good film on the back of a postcard. You should cover a whole plot in one computer game.

"I start with only the vaguest idea – like the open-ended principle when writing a book. And I usually develop only one out of every ten ideas I have," Terry said.

One of the biggest problems is the starting point. We have all played gmaes where, all of a sudden, the action starts and we're slap bang in the middle of the game – and have probably suffered a few hits from the computer.

"The opening page must stay for at least a minute. Because this didn't happen in *Space Invaders*, my first impression was that there was nothing much to it," Terry commented.

"The same principle applies if I'm not too sure what's going on, or why I've got a sudden score. It leaves me deflated.

"A lot of writers like demonstrating multiple scrolls – four hazards attacking you at different speeds, for example. They can't understand why that may not add to the enjoyment. I stop the scroll and study it. If it looks good standing still, it will work.

"Once in the game, I like to learn the tactics. I want to feel I'm playing better. In *Storm Warrior*, for example, you could stay longer on the first page to bump up your score. The psychology is important here. If you get through easily, you're lulled into thinking it is not an important scene. You want to stay to bump up your score. But the next time you play there is a different pattern of shots.

"Every time you play *Storm Warrior*, you should find something new to do. You learn a playing method which is geared up not just to a higher score but also to surviving better."

There's more to a game than making you feel good. You also must not feel bad.

"I don't like players to get cross," Terry confessed. "This often happens if there is a scene you can't get through and you must start all over again. There are two very difficult areas in *Storm Warrior*. One is the devil's staircase. That's so difficult to negotiate. I knew it was possible to play it – but I couldn't! I tested this section on a lot of people. If they failed, they groaned – but didn't get angry. When they succeeded, the player satisfaction – very important – was extraordinary."

Most new games have a demo mode to show the intricacies of the playing action.

"I've tried a new idea in *Storm Warrior*," Terry said. "Demo mode goes halfway through the game, and the player can take over at any point. During the second half, you're on your own.

"Any game with less than six screens is in trouble nowadays," Terry criticised. "It helps the player identify with the game. But, as I said, one thing that irritates people is a sudden break in continuity. If two scenes flow like one, I'm satisfied. If they feel like two distinct elements, they jar."

In the race to make original games, programmers put in multiple hazards, and make difficulties by increasing speed only. In *Storm Warrior*, the hero is engaged in one-to-one combat with a barbarian. One fight – but a lot of moves are needed.

"If the player just swizzles the joystick in circles when it comes to a zapping area, the game is no good. Players must dive off the chair trying to hit the enemy," Terry summed up. "And if there isn't a good playing action, the game becomes a hotch-

HOW TO RECOGNISE A GREAT GAME

- It improves your skill, gives you a sense of purpose and a reward
- It has a good plot
- It has continuity
- It gives you time to think before each new screen
- You want to stay longer on certain screens
- You don't get cross with it
- You 'identify' with the main character
- It has realism
- You enjoy the sound
- It is 'ageless'

SPACED-OUT ON GAMES?

potch, a sign of desperation. Like hitting things when they are a certain colour, or collecting numerous objects.

"Programmers continually learn new tricks, things to impress potential buyers. They should remember that some things appeal just because they're normal. For example, when lightning flashes in *Storm Warrior*, the birds become mere silhouettes. The fact that they react to the storm makes it more realistic.

"Other programmers experiment with sound: three-part harmonies, all the voices possible. I like to use only two and keep something for sound effects. Just for pleasure, you should have something that sounds like an orchestra.

"In the US, music is a game hazard – a game risk, they call it. A certain type of music or sound at a certain stage will distract you, even though you may not notice. I prefer the usual distractions. For example, the second screen in *Storm Warriors* has thunder and lightning; it doesn't harm you but it does distract you. A game has not been written properly if it needs sound for distraction. After all, you can always turn it off.

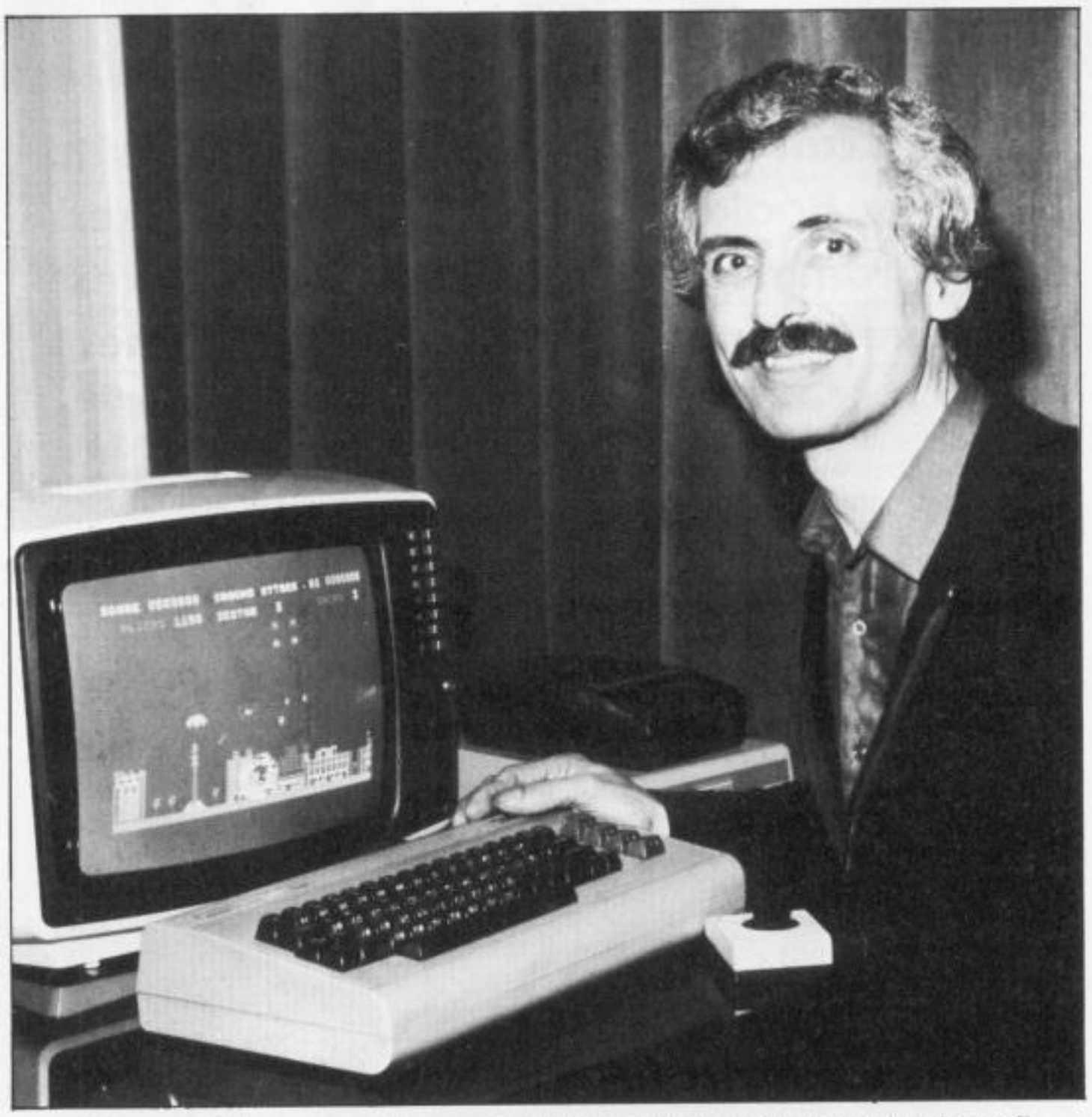
"Players want a reward for all the time and effort they've spent on a game. So I've put in a victory fanfare, a skill-dependent bonus – and you also hold your score for replay. A score of three million is possible. The best I managed is 800,000 over three games. Then, much to my frustration, I got a telephone call – forgot to press the space bar which pauses the action – and got zapped out.

"Age, too, is important. If *Space Invaders* had been written with teddy bears trespassing across a park and park keepers chasing them, it would not have been a successful game. The game play would have been the same. But people would have thought it childish, nothing like zapping aliens and saving the world. The worst review I got – for *Quintic Warrior* – was: 'I think it might please my ten-year old son'. I think games should be ageless – you should enjoy them until you're sixty – or older.

"The whole game should be aimed at the last page. In *Storm Warrior*'s you must land on a skull. You could double your score, depending on your remaining energy. This is converted into score at the rate of 100 to one.

"So the player has completed the game efficiently and well. He/she has survived with energy.

"It's quite easy to get through some games, but to come through them well is different." □

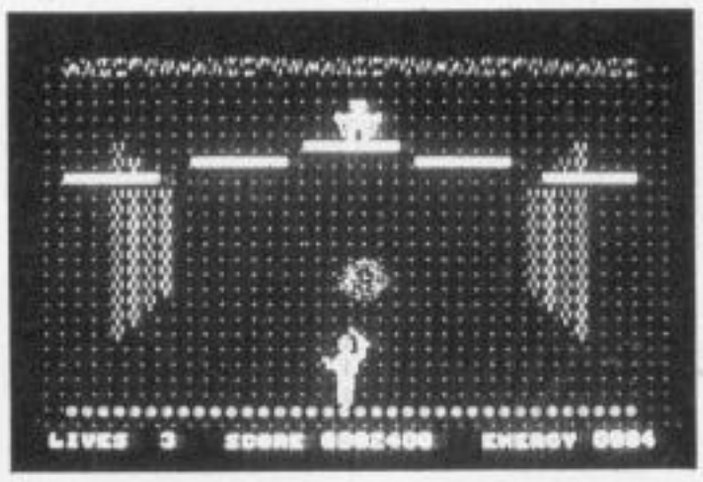


Terry Watts: "Players must dive off the chair trying to hit the enemy"

PROGRAMMERS SHOULD PLAY FAIR!

"Some distractions are not honest," Terry criticises. "They feel like cheating to me." So, gamers, beware the following points in your games:

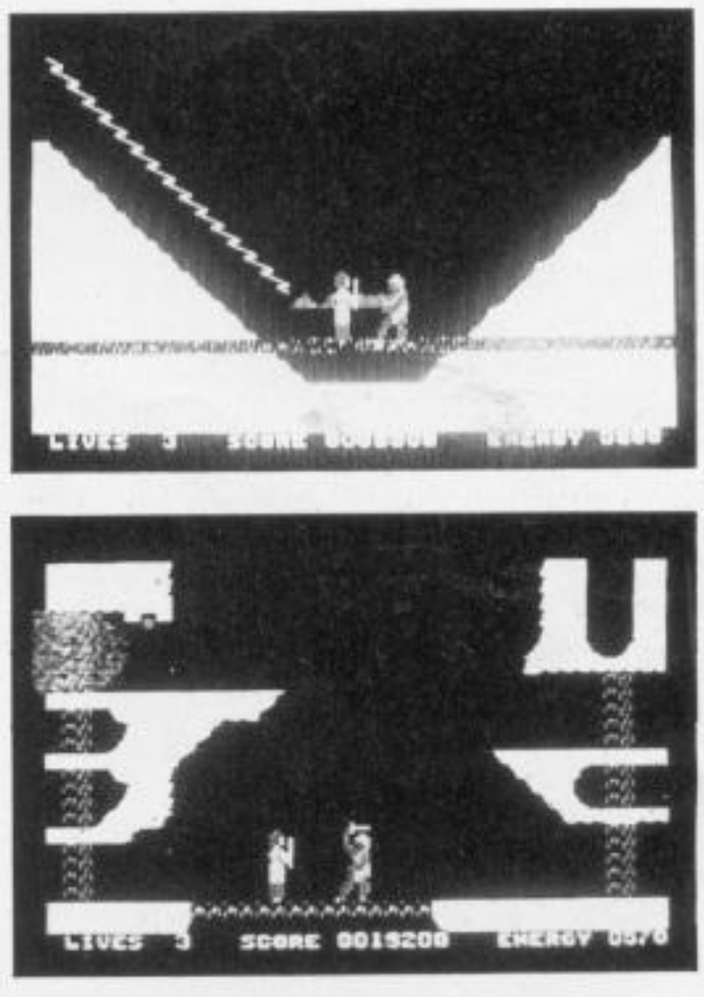
- things that happen at random in the corners or edge of the screen while the gameplay is in the centre
- music that changes key or becomes louder during an especially tricky section
- sudden changes of colour – screen or characters – for no obvious reason

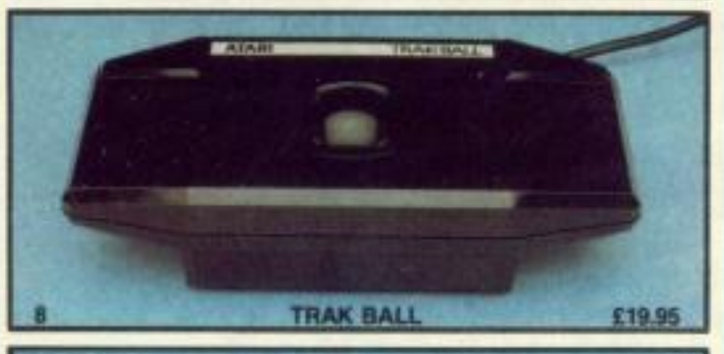


Above: the background graphics enrich this scene from Storm Warrior – and distract the player.

Above right: to add a realistic touch, lightning flashes while you engage in battle.

Right: as in the other scenes, one-to-one confrontation involves complex moves





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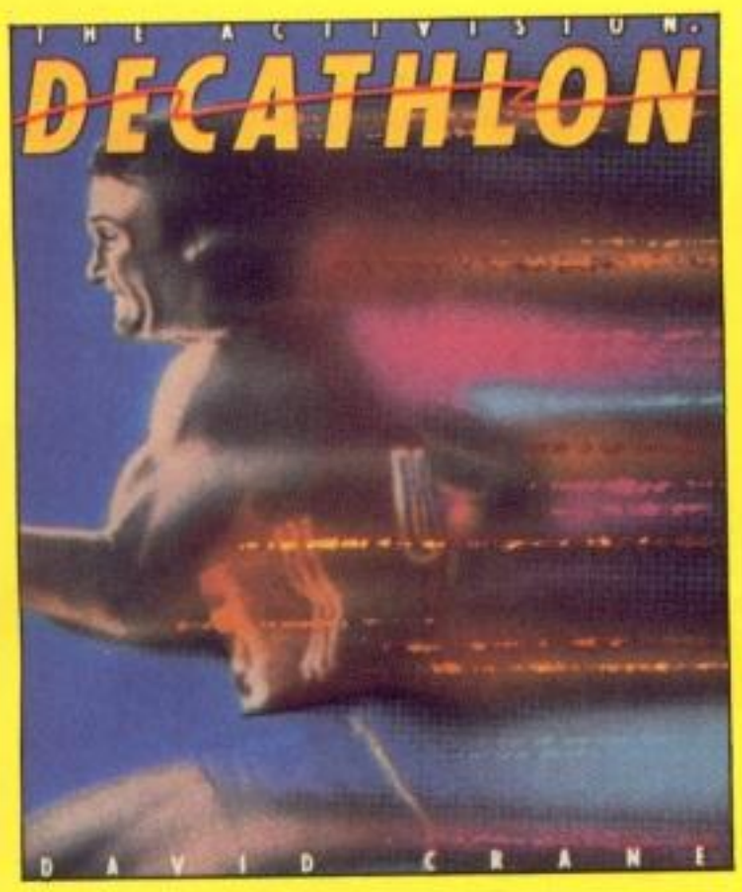
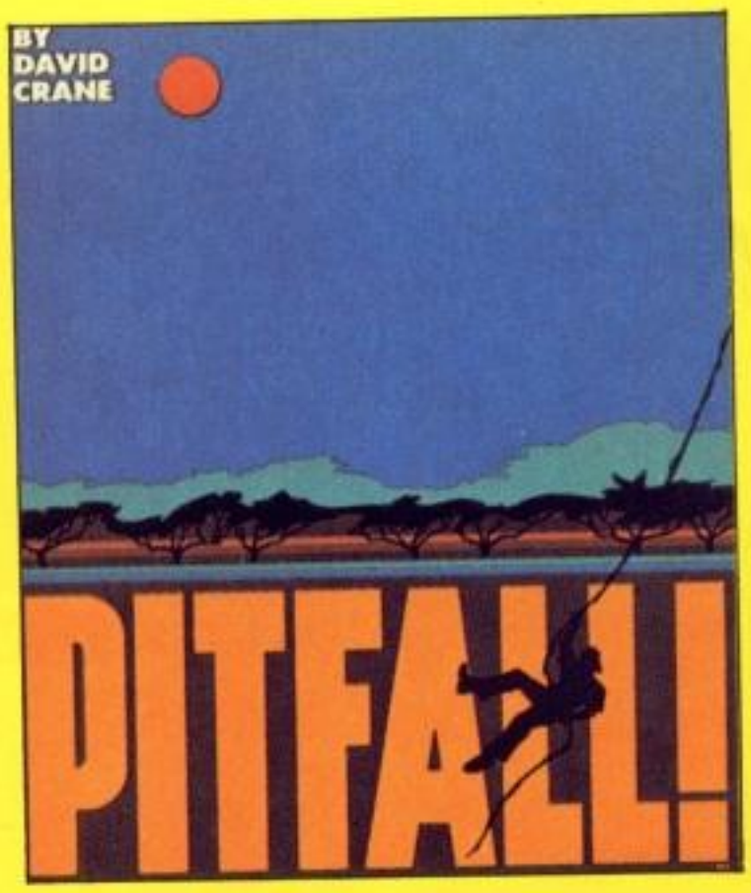
How many times have you played a game, only to think that you could have written a better one? Well, now's your chance to do just that - and you may become a national bestselling author!





JOIN THE RANKS OF ACTIVISION'S TOP DESIGNERS!

Dave Crane: *Pitfall* I and II, *Decathlon, Ghostbusters, Fishing Derby, Dragster, Laser Blast, Freeway, Grand Prix*
Steve Cartwright: *MegaMania, Plaque Attack, Barnstorming, Seaquest, Frostbite*
Carol Shaw: *River Raid, Happy Trails*
Steve Kitchen: *Space Shuttle*
Garry Kitchen: *Keystone Kapers, Pressure Cooker*
Larry Miller: *Enduro, Spider Fighter*
Alan Miller: *Tennis, Checkers, Ice Hockey, StarMaster*
Dave Rolfe: *Beamrider*
John van Ryzin: *HERO*
Matthew Hubbard: *Zenji, Dolphin*
Bob Whitehead: *Boxing, Skiing, Stampede, Chopper Command, Sky Jinks, Private Eye*
Tom Loughry: *The Dreadnaught Factor, Worm Whomper*
Mark Turmell: *Toy Bizarre*

Founded in October 1979 in California, Activision now distributes screen games in over fifty countries. Its five top games – *Pitfall* I and II, *River Raid, Space Shuttle* and *Beamrider* – have already been awarded the title of best game of 1984 by seven US magazines. 1983 had seen eight awards given – to *The Activision Decathlon, Enduro, Keystone Kapers, Dolphin, Oink!, River Raid* and *Pitfall!*

Now you can join Activision's hall of fame. Just think up an original game – go on, you must often have thought you could do better than most of the games writers around. Just write to us with the details – the key game elements, what each screen looks like, and the gameplay involved.

If you are submitting a game program, say what machine it is intended for – and do give details on how to load! The program doesn't have to be fully coded, but must be accompanied by details of how it would operate on the machine.

Activision's UK representatives will look at each game sent in by TV Gamer's readers. And if it's good enough, it will be developed to join Activision's international hall of fame.

You've got some good tips from Terry Watt on the previous pages. For even more, Activision will send you a booklet of tips on writing games if you write to: Activision UK, TV Gamer Competition, 15 Harley House, Marylebone Road, London NW1.

The competition rules are below. Of course Activision will respect the confidentiality of all submissions. They will have the first option on each game idea/program for a period ending one month after the competition ends on 15 January 1985. Send your entry to: TV Gamer Activision Competition, 187/195 Oxford Street, London W1R 1AJ (don't forget to attach the declaration below). Winners will be notified before April 1985.

COMPETITION RULES

1 The game must be original, and not a variation of any other game, story or film.
2 The game must not be submitted to any other magazine or software house before 28th February 1985.
3 All entries received by the closing date, 15th January 1985, will be examined; the best entry or entries will be determined by representatives of Activision UK, and their decision will be final.
4 If, in the opinion of Activision UK, no game is of a sufficiently high standard for further development, there will be no winner of the competition. Activision will not proceed with any game.
5 The prizewinner(s) will be notified by post.
6 If you wish your entry to be returned, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, entries which are unsuccessful in the competition will be destroyed.
7 In the unlikely event that Activision UK is already developing a game similar to one sent in by a reader of TV Gamer, Activision will not be bound to make any payment to, or arrangement with, the reader.
8 All entries must be accompanied by this entry form cut from TV Gamer. Photocopies are not acceptable. Each entrant may submit more than one entry with this form.
9 Whilst every care will be taken in connection with this competition, neither TV Gamer nor Activision can accept any responsibility for documents, cassettes or other material sent to them.

I agree to be bound by the above rules, and I confirm that I am over 18 (if under 18, a parent or guardian must sign on your behalf also).

Signed .....

Parent/guardian (if under 18) .....

Address .....

..... **Postcode** .....

HAVE YOU GOT ONE OF THESE?

Now's your chance to become a hardware designer. Using the gridsheet below, invent the most revolutionary piece of Spectrum hardware ever (whilst remaining plausible). The only condition is that it must connect to the Speccy via the rear edge interface. If you think your peripheral needs some explanation, then enclose additional details.

Name .....

Address .....

..... Postcode .....

Attach your design and return to Spectrum Competition, TV Gamer, 187 Oxford Street, London W1R1AH

COMPETITION RULES

1 All entries received by the closing date, 31 December 1984, will be examined and judged by the Editor.

2 Only entries submitted with the entry form, cut from this issue of *TV Gamer*, will be accepted (photocopies ineligible).

3 The competition winner will be advised by post and details will be published in a forthcoming issue of *TV Gamer*.

4 The prize is to UK standards. Servicing cannot be guaranteed overseas.

5 The prize will be awarded to the contestant whose design, in the opinion of the Editor or her appointed panel, is the most original and practical.

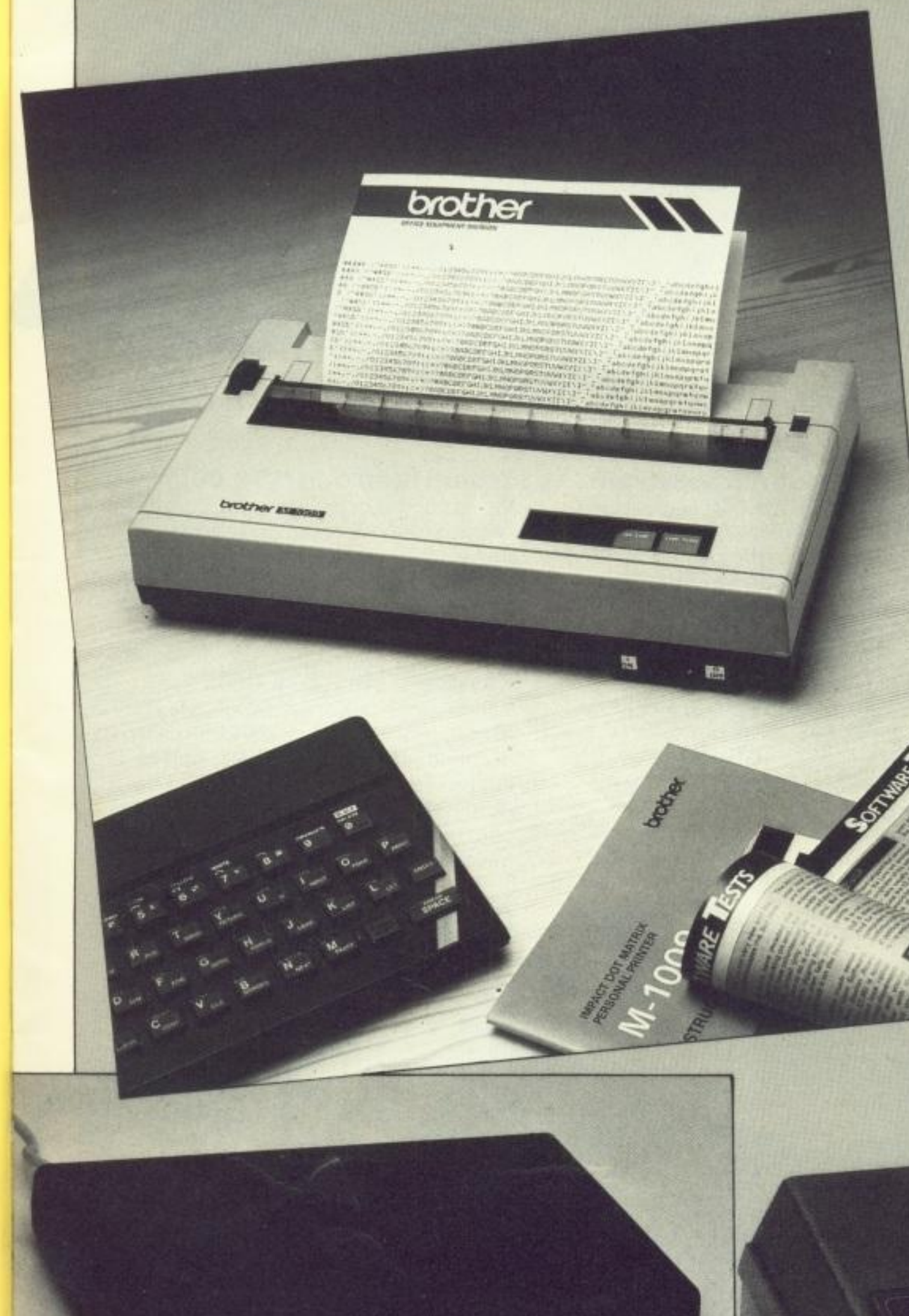
6 The Editor's decision is final.

THEN WIN ALL OF THESE!

GRAND FIRST PRIZE
A complete Spectrum Gamers Peripheral Kit comprising:

- **One Brother M1-009 dot matrix printer, valued at £200**
- **One Prism modem, to handle Micronet and the rest of Prestel. Value £100**
- **One Challenge Research Sprint data recorder, which loads games four times faster than standard tape drives. Valued at £65.00**
- **One Sinclair Research Spectrum Interface 1, which links a printer and fast-access microdrives to the Spectrum. Valued at £50.00**
- **One Currah Microspeech unit, which gives some games the ability to talk back to you. Valued at £30.00.**
- **One Sinclair Research Spectrum Interface 2, allowing the use of both joysticks and ROM cartridges. Valued at £20.00**
- **One Trojan light pen, adding creativity to the games system. Value £18.00**
- **One Currah U slot, allowing a number of peripherals to be used at once. Valued at £15.00**
- **One Atari Super Controller, to take the wear and tear out of the keyboard. Valued at £15.00**
- **Assorted Spectrum software to the value of £30.00**
- **TOTAL FIRST PRIZE VALUE NEARLY £550.00!**
- **Two second prizes of Sprint data recorders**
- **Two third prizes of Trojan light pens**
- **Five runners-up prizes of a piece of Spectrum games software**

SPECTRUM PRIZE DETAILS



Brother M1-009 (£200.00) A recent addition to the Brother range of printers, this combines all the speed and flexibility of a dot-matrix printer with a down to earth price.

The printer will interface with the Spectrum via the Sinclair Interface 1 (also included in the prize), or with any other Spectrum printer interface currently available.

The M1-009 will reproduce text quickly and neatly, so is ideal for word processing or program listing. Its greatest asset to the gamer is its ability to do hi-res screen dumps of your favourite games. Much better and cheaper than the often hit or miss world of screen photography.

Prism Modem (£100.00) Once you link up your modem to your Spectrum and begin thumbing through the electronic pages of Prestel and Micronet, you'll wonder how you ever managed to pass the time without it. There are literally thousands of screens full of information, which are beamed to you at high speed via the telephone lines.

Challenge Research Sprint data recorder (£65.00) There are lots of different tape recorders on the market all claiming to be the best. There is really only one that is truly revolutionary and that's the Sprint. Why? The Sprint operates at four times the speed of a standard tape recorder. So you will be able to load games in a quarter of the time, which leaves you with more time to play and less time twiddling your thumbs waiting for two or three minutes that seem like hours.

COMPETITION

COMPETITION

SPECTRUM PRIZE DETAILS

Sinclair Research Interface 1 (£50.00) This peripheral has two main functions. Firstly, it allows you to use a wide range of printers, including the one we offer. It also allows you to use the famous microdrives which can store up to 100K per drive, with an access time of seconds rather than minutes. It is also useful because it props up the Spectrum at a more convenient angle for keyboarding.

Currah Microspeech (£30.00) How often do you shout at your computer, half expecting a reply. Well, thanks to the Currah Microspeech add-on, you can actually give the old ZX the power of speech. There are already quite a few games on the market which utilise the speech, and many more are in the pipeline.

Sinclair Research Spectrum Interface 2(£20.00) Many games for the Spectrum are made almost unplayable due to the number of keys you need to press to make your gamepiece do what you want it to. Thanks to Interface 2, you can connect a pair of joysticks. So gameplaying is much easier and saves your keybaord from much wear and tear.

Interface 2 also offers the user access to ROM cartridge software made by Sinclair

Trojan light pen (£18.00) With the aid of this accessory, you can create video works of art by just drawing on the screen. In addition to that, several games are being written to take advantage of this exiting peripheral.

Currah U slot (£15.00) This handy piece of hardware allows you to plug more than one peripheral in at a time (especially useful as part of this prize). Additional boards can be obtained so that all your peripherals can be plugged in once, and will never have to be removed again.

Atari Super Controller (£15.00) Atari's new top of the range model.

THE GAMER IN THE STREET

Jo Kearns and Darrin Williamson take to the streets to meet the gaming public. What's the most popular games system, game or software house? Who buys games and peripherals? And what do you think about the government's attempts to ban under-18s from the arcades? We've got the answers.

Right in the middle of the tourist season and school holidays, *TV Gamer* decided to take on the streets of London with a special questionnaire aimed at the gaming public.

We started our first day in the computer games department of Lion House Micros in Tottenham Court Road, moving on later in the afternoon to Video Palace in Oxford Street. We ended up in Pilot City Software, Rathbone Place.

The first part of the survey was concerned with computers and computer games. We weren't too surprised to discover that most owners had either a Commodore 64 or ZX Spectrum 48K, with the BBC 'B' and Atari not too far behind. Perhaps the other owners were congregating in some other part of the West End.

We went on to ask people whether they preferred cassettes, cartridges or discs. Hardly anyone said they preferred cartridges. But those who did admitted that, despite the easier loading, they were too expensive for their pocket.

The several people who paid out for discs did so because they thought the fast loading and larger storage space made it worthwhile. One twenty six-year old, who programmed his own games for his children, said he liked discs because there were less input/output errors.

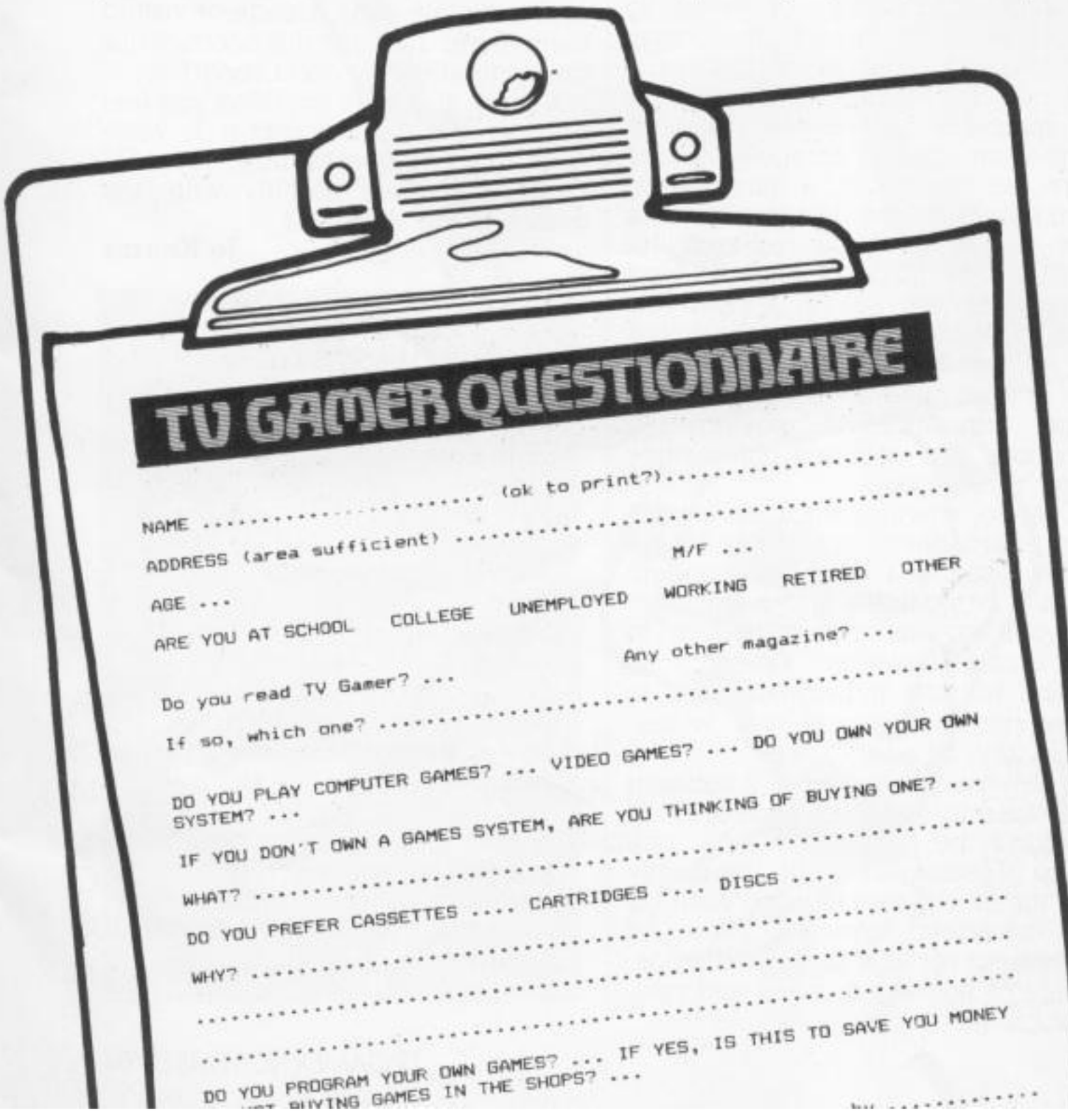
It would seem that cassettes will remain the most popular for some time to come, simply because they are cheaper and more abundant and so provide the greatest choice.

Everyone hated being asked what their favourite game was. All wanted to list at least ten they were currently into. Even ruthless prompting from

BASIC FACTS

Background to gamers interviewed

Average age:	%
9-12 years old	14
13-15 years old	34
16-19 years old	20
20-23 years old	12
24-30 years old	12
30-36 years old	8
Systems owned:	
Commodore	26
Spectrum	22
Atari	14
Apple IIe	6
Others	26
No system:	6
(figures total more than 100% because some people own more than one system)	
Family and friends also use the system	76
Family and friends also buy games, books and peripherals	38
Method preferred:	
Cassettes	46
Discs	38
Cartridges	18
Programming knowledge	54


TV GAMER QUESTIONNAIRE
NAME ..... (ok to print?).....
ADDRESS (area sufficient) .....
M/F ...
AGE ...
ARE YOU AT SCHOOL COLLEGE UNEMPLOYED WORKING RETIRED OTHER
Do you read TV Gamer? ... Any other magazine? ...
If so, which one? .....
DO YOU PLAY COMPUTER GAMES? ... VIDEO GAMES? ... DO YOU OWN YOUR OWN SYSTEM? ...
IF YOU DON'T OWN A GAMES SYSTEM, ARE YOU THINKING OF BUYING ONE? ...
WHAT? .....
DO YOU PREFER CASSETTES .... CARTRIDGES .... DISCS ....
WHY? .....
.....
.....
DO YOU PROGRAM YOUR OWN GAMES? ... IF YES, IS THIS TO SAVE YOU MONEY BUYING GAMES IN THE SHOPS? ...
.....

TOP FAVOURITES

Favourite games:	
Jet Set Willy (Software Projects)	8%
Beachhead (US Gold)	
Decathlon (Activision)	
Frak (Aardvark)	4%
Hunchback (Ocean)	each
Summer Games (Epyx)	
Favourite software houses:	
None	50%
Ultimate	14%
Imagine	
Ocean	
US Gold	4% each

the *TV Gamer* surveyors – "No, I'm sorry, you can have only one. Imagine yourself stuck for the rest of your life on a desert island with your computer and just one game" – we still had to come back to the question at the end of the questionnaire.

The exception was one ten-year old Australian girl who told us without hesitation that her favourite was a game called *Snakers* which had been invented by the computer class in her school back home. Surprisingly, no one particular game stood out from the others.

Similar results arose when we asked people if they had a favourite software house. The reasons people gave for their choices were, as expected, connected to what was available for their particular machine, with quality of graphics getting quite a few mentions. Adventure gamers were a bit fussier about the gaming challenge offered by certain suppliers. This seems to be synonomous with addiction. More adventurers were consistent in their choice when buying a new game.

There were mixed feelings on educational games. The ten to thirteen age group weren't keen on the idea at all, and almost resented the infiltration of education into their world of tapes and discs. The older gamers were more receptive, saying that they found them fun. But, again, there was a mixed response to whether they'd actually learnt anything from them.

One fifteen-year old boy interviewed in Video Palace seemed satisfied that he had genuinely learnt a lot about the book *Romeo and Juliet* from a tape on understanding Shakespeare. Somebody else said he had limped through learning to type by using a teach-yourself tape. In general, there was support for the idea of educational games, but many thought they needed to be improved.

The survey also showed that gamers are certainly not selfish folk. The majority of you happily share your computer and games with friends and families. This is probably because of the need to talk to other people who are familiar with the gaming language and able to share the enthusiasm.

We would have thought that younger gamers had a lot of their games and peripherals bought for them by parents, but this was not necessarily the case. About half of the ten-to thirteen-year olds liked saving to buy with their own pocket money.

It's good to hear that all the system owners questioned have no intention of trading in their machines to take up another pastime! But they weren't too concerned about upgrading their present model either: only a handful were thinking about buying a new one. This would indicate that computer gaming is not so much a passing fad as an addition to the traditional growing household of washing machines, food mixers, train sets, bicycles and one-eared teddy bears.

A different attitude appeared from our questions on arcades. Frequent visits to arcades by computer games were, on the whole, a thing of the past, except for the odd visit to see a new game. And the ex-arcaders confessed to having once played them to excess, so the appeal was now negligible. Amongst the younger age group, who still visited arcades at least once a week, there was some resistance to paying the rumoured 30p coin-ops unless they were "really" good.

Even so, whether our interviewees went to arcades or not, nearly everybody disagreed with government plans to ban gamers under eighteen. This opinion was not confined just to the under-eighteens. Freedom of choice and the individual's right to waste his/her money was widespread with all ages.

A few people felt that, if supervision was improved, the issue of a ban shouldn't be necessary. As one group of teenagers put it, "it's mostly the under-eighteens who want to visit arcades, anyway". Those in agreement with the ban said the possibility of housing arcades and one-armed bandits separately would make them consider changing their opinion.

One of the reasons for the ban is the fear that youngsters might be accosted. But when the question of being approached or accosted in an arcade was raised, apart from being pestered by scroungers, there was only one case of a sixteen-year old boy having been offered drugs. The same boy had also been offered the sale of a jumper (of all things), so that its owner could have more money for playing the arcades. Few people we spoke to said that they made a habit of staying late at an arcade or visited them alone. Perhaps this accounts for the comparatively good report.

Finally, if there's anything you feel strongly about in this report do write in. It would be interesting to see if *TV Gamer's* readers identify with "the gamer in the street". □

Jo Kearns

EDUCATIONAL GAMES

	%
Percentage who have played educational games	50
Did you find them fun?	
Yes	24
No	20
So-so	6
Have you learned anything?	
Yes	18
No	32
Percentage who haven't played educational games	50
Do you think they might be fun?	
Yes	6
No	18
So-so	26

ARCADES AND ONE-ARMED BANDITS

Frequency of visits to arcades	%
never	24
each week	12
each month	22
2-3 times a year	20
only on holidays	22
Percentage who play bandits:	
more often	2
as often	6
less often	22
never	46
Should parliament try to ban under-18s from arcades?	
Yes 14 No 62 Indifferent	24

Half of those who agreed with the moves to ban under-18s from arcades would change their minds if games machines were separated from one-armed bandits, as in the US.

ARCADES AND MOLESTATION

How late do you play in the arcades?	%
up to 6pm	28
6-8pm	32
9-11pm	8
12am+	8
Are you accompanied?	
Always	12
Sometimes	48
Never	16
One reason for trying to ban under-18s from arcades is the fear they might be molested. Has this ever happened to you?	
Yes	6
No	70

In each case a gamer was approached in an arcade, it was someone looking for a handout.

HEARD ABOUT THE COMPUTER MEGA-MAG?

There's only one Big K.
A computer mega-mag that gives it to you straight. No frills. No waffle. No blurb. No unnecessary rubbish. Just the facts, straight, humorous, critical. Take this month for example. Bursting with news, reviews, features and programs.

It's out now. The November issue of Big K including: STRONTIUM DOG and THE FALL GUY (exciting new games), VIDEO DISEASES (how to cure them), SID THE COMMODORE SOUNDCHIP (how he does it), PLUS a host of games programs for ORIC, ELECTRON, SPECTRUM, COMMODORE 64, and BBC.

GET YOUR MITT ON THE COMPUTER MEGA-MAG FOR JUST 85 PENCE.

THE ARCADE SCENE

Screen games usually appear in the arcades long before we see them on home systems. Andy Harris (aka King Coinop) continues his search to find the best.

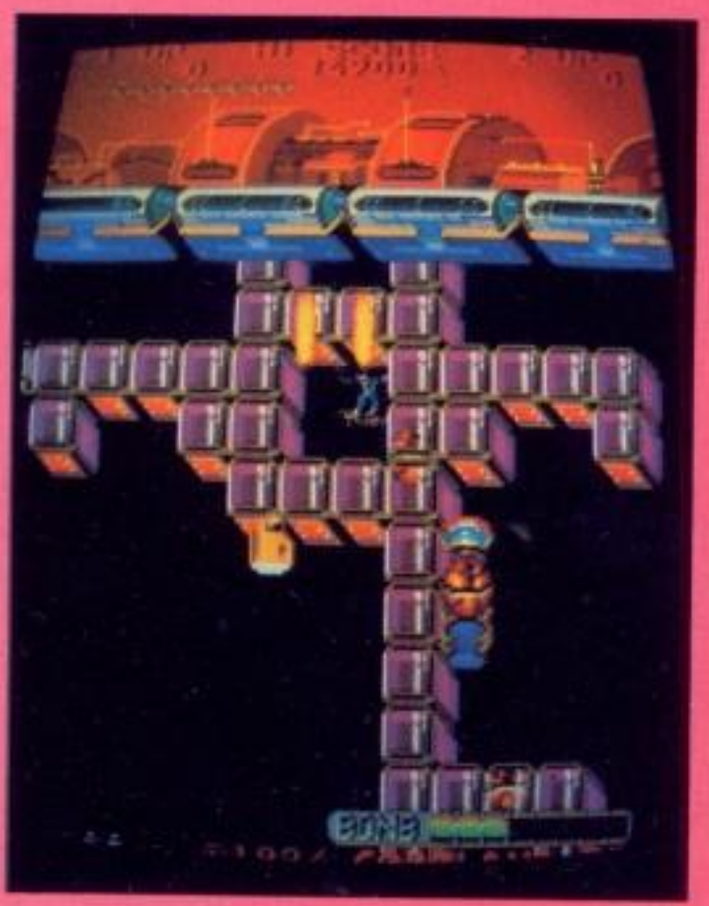
When I first encountered *Swat* I had great difficulty trying to work out what the game was about. Eventually, I gave up trying to understand, and just started to play. This was fully in accordance with Harris's first law of arcading: "If in doubt – insert 20 pence".

After some intensive joystick jerking and button banging, I began to make sense of *Swat*. It is, in fact, a rather good game.

The player is represented on the screen by a human-like figure. He is controlled by a familiar eight-way joystick. Fire and bomb buttons are strategically placed, ready for instant action.

The top of the screen is taken up by what looks like the hull of a flying saucer or a space colony. Underneath this are clusters of square, blue blocks. Beneath them are similar red blocks which pile up on each other, rising towards the blue blocks.

If these red blocks should meet the blue blocks or the flying saucer, the little man's prospects of survival are about as great as those of a hedgehog on a motorway. Balls of flame, robots and monsters launch into a mass attack on the helpless fellow. So the moral of the story is: don't allow the red blocks to build up too high.



The blue blocks at the top of the screen can be destroyed by pressing the fire button, and aiming the man in the right direction by using the joystick. It seems to me that it's a good idea to eliminate the blue blocks as soon as possible. It doesn't take long and, it's tremendously satisfying.

Meanwhile, the red blocks below you are piling up. They can also be destroyed by shooting, but only from the side or underneath. They are also more resistant than the blue blocks. When you do manage to destroy one, any blocks above it will float gently upwards, turning blue as they go.

The bomb button enables you to plant bombs in the blocks. When I tried this, the usual result was that my man got blown to smithereens by his own explosion. The exact operational advantages of the bombs remain a mystery to me.

Points are scored for shooting blocks, and also for hitting the mysterious globes which appear at random. Contact with the globes means death for your man. But at least they can be shot down, unlike what look like cosmic churns, floating gently but lethally around the screen.

I had a great time playing *Swat*. I still don't understand it – maybe you will.

Left: Swat. It's a good idea to eliminate the blue blocks as soon as possible. Otherwise, balls of flame and monsters attack.

I had no problems understanding *Mad Crusher*, largely because I've played dozens of other games which are almost identical. Even so, it's an entertaining machine and well worth a few coins of anyone's money.

The aim of the game is to drive your car along the track, firing at the other cars and trying not to collide with them.

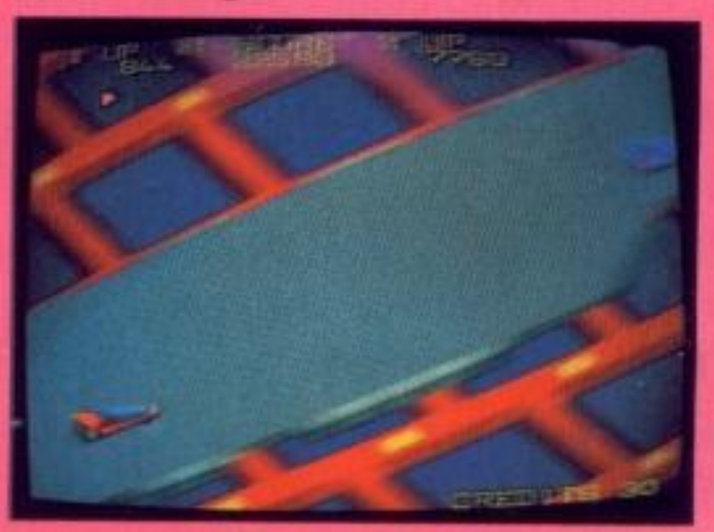
Every so often, a yawning gap appears in the road. A jump button enables you to leap the abyss. You will also come across a power zone which you drive into and along – before emerging as the four-wheeled equivalent of the Incredible Hulk. The transformation lasts for only fifteen seconds or so, but enables you to knock the other cars off the track and into oblivion.

The best thing about *Mad Crusher* is the graphics. In the first section, action takes place in a space environment, with asteroids floating sedately past. Grid patterns and all kinds of pretty colours crop up in the later stages of the game.

Perhaps a selection of phrases from the Japanese publicity hand-out can best convey the excitement to be had from the game.

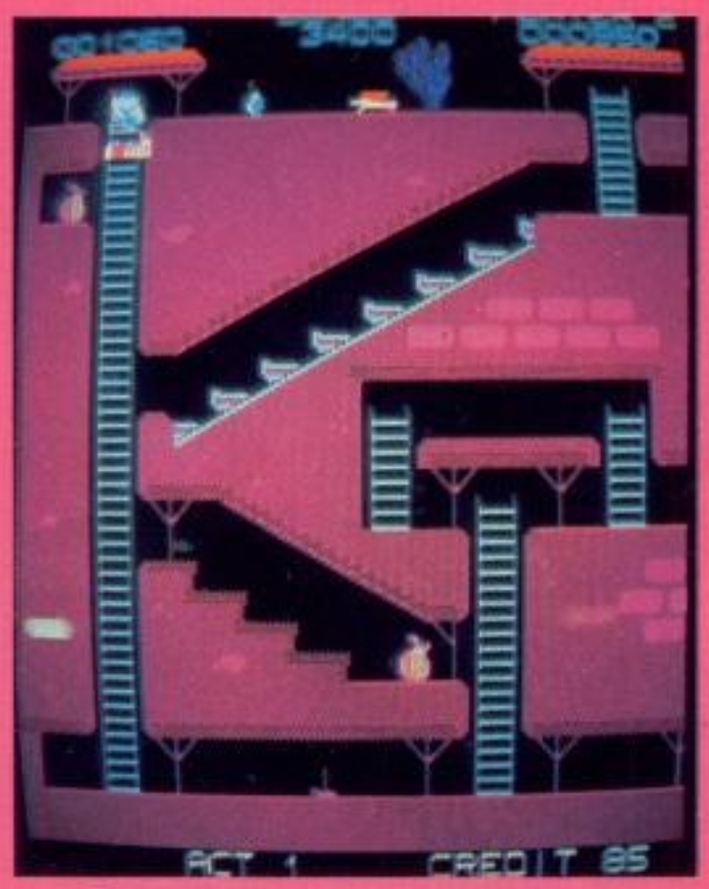
"Fun to soot!(sic), Fun to jump, Fun to reach the unknown spectacle!"
"Destroy forthcoming enemies with fire button".
"A jumping avoid enemies".
"Crash enemies after through power zones".

Thrilling stuff, what? Seriously, the language may not be up to UK standards – the game is.



ALL MACHINES SUPPLIED BY TAITEL UK

THE ARCADE SCENE



Super Bagman is hard at work underground, retrieving bags of money and depositing them in his wheelbarrow. Having collected all the money bags, he unlocks his friend from the jail. And they both live happily ever after.

Like life, though, video games aren't always as simple as they might appear to be. *Super Bagman* is no exception. Grabbing the first money bag is an easy task: up the ladder, get the bag, down the ladder, and up the escalator to the waiting wheelbarrow while the policeman pursues you in a decidedly half-hearted manner. He is trying to lull you into a false sense of security, as you will soon discover. Not only does he dog your every footstep, but he calls in reinforcements as well, however unsporting it may seem.

There are ways of evening the odds slightly. Scattered around the mine shafts are bombs, hammers, guns and assorted implements of destruction. These can be used to see off the forces of law and order. But be warned! The effects of a bomb blast or a volley of shots from a gun will stun the policemen only for a few seconds. Then they're after you again.

Super Bagman is unusual in that you can travel to any of four separate screens at any time. You can go up and down the ladders, up the escalator, down the steps, and up and down in the lift. Beware of falling down a shaft to your doom! It may be my ineptitude, but I found it impossible to jump across a shaft while carrying a money bag. This led to my early demise on many occasions.

If you wish, you can take the wheelbarrow full of money with you around the screens. If you leave it in the same place, it can cause problems. This is because you are given a certain length of time to deposit the next bag. If you fail – you die. Also, the less time you take, the more bonus points you earn.

As I've said, the policemen are very resilient. They are also very fair, and will start shooting at you only if you shoot at them. If that situation arises, be very careful: they're very good shots.

When you have successfully collected all the money bags, put them in your wheelbarrow. Once you have evaded your pursuers, you can think about releasing your partner from his subterranean prison. First, you must find the key. That remains hidden throughout the game, revealing itself only when the last money bag has been recovered.

Super Bagman is difficult to do well the first few times you play it. But, like all maze games, practice makes perfect and even practicing is fun.

Hot on the heels of *Punch Out*, Nintendo has released *VS Tennis*. It comprises two complete arcade units blended into one. One, two or four people can play at the same time, either against the computer or against each other.

Controls are eight-way joysticks to control the players' movements, and push buttons. One is for serving, smashes and ground strokes; the other is for lobbing the ball.

Whether you're playing against the computer or another person, the figure on the court nearest you is your player. I found this a little disconcerting, as mine was wearing a skirt, but I soon got used to the idea.

You must be flexible these days.

The player throws the ball into the air and serves by hitting the serve button. Hit it too early and the serve will be long, too late and the ball will go into the net.

After a successful serve, your opponent will probably manage to return the ball, requiring further action on your part. Positioning is crucial, as in real tennis. If you stand too far left or right, or too far back or forward, you'll miss the ball. By use of the joystick in conjunction with the push buttons, it's possible to place the ball fairly accurately. But there's no way of controlling the distance.

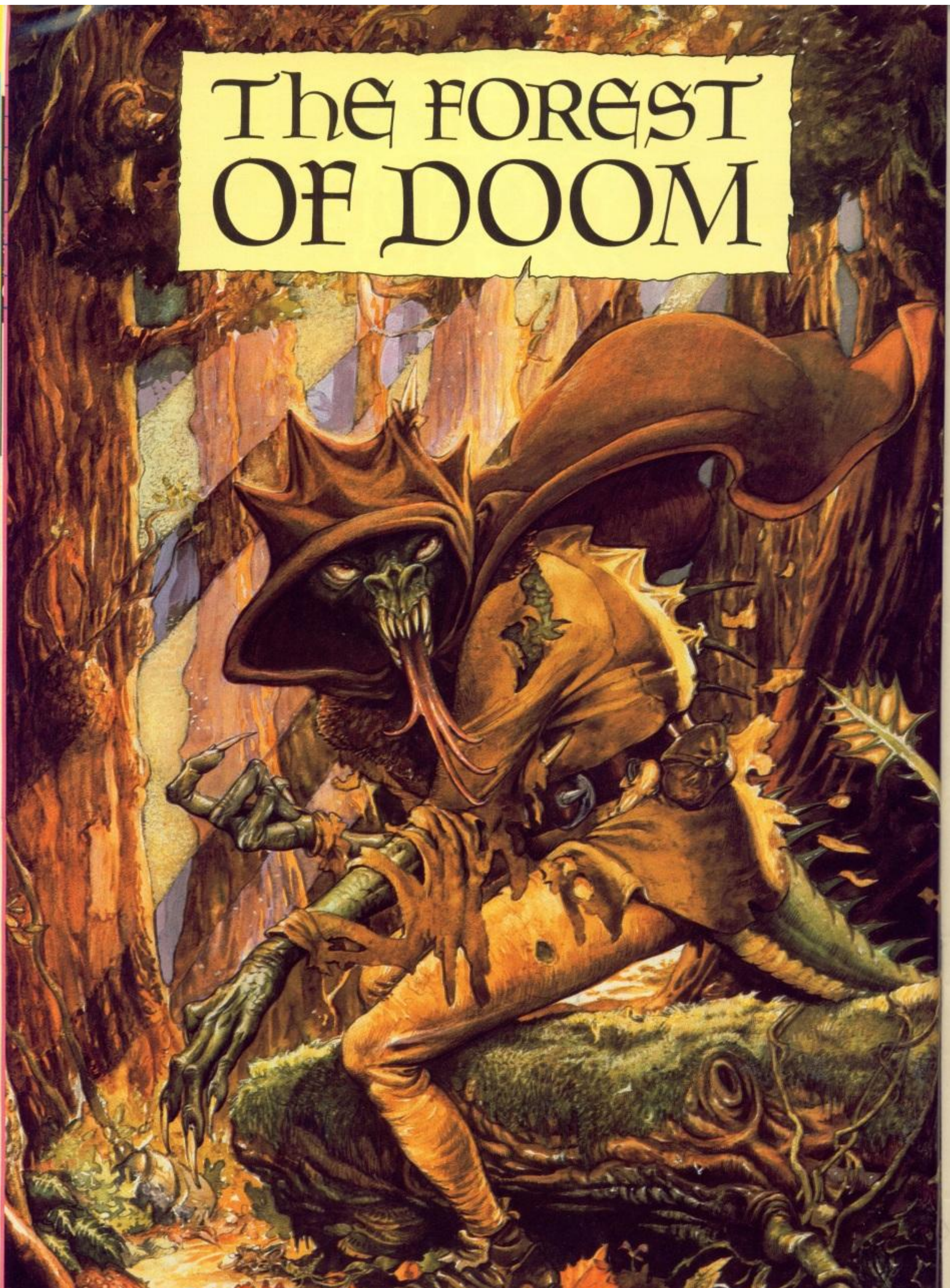
The excitement starts when you or your opponent move up to the net to smash the ball. If your opponent tries it, get to the back of the court. Return the shot with a lob, so that the ball goes over his head. When you feel in an aggressive mood, remember that if you use a back-hand stroke the ball will go to the right. A fore-hand stroke will do the opposite.

Once you get into the swing of it, *VS Tennis* is surprisingly realistic. The only thing that lets it down is the lack of interesting sound effects. Instead of shouting his decisions, the umpire has a little word bubble coming out of his mouth.

The game lasts for as long as it takes you to lose three games. So value for money is very good. When your money does run out, the machine offers you the opportunity to continue the game where you left off.

I can see myself spending a lot of time keeping my world famous back-hand volley in shape, courtesy of *VS Tennis* – even if I do have to wear a skirt. See you on court. □

The Forest of Doom



John Griffiths scrutinises Puffin's first adventure: The Forest of Doom.

"You are an adventurer, sword for hire, roaming the northern borderlands of your kingdom. Having spurned the dullness of village life, you now wander the lands in search of wealth and danger.

"Not once during the last ten days since entering the northern borderlands have you set eyes on another person. This does not worry you at all, as you are happy with your own company and enjoy the slow sunny days hunting, eating and sleeping.

"These are strange lands inhabited by weird and loathsome beasts – goblins, trolls and even dragons. As the flame of your camp fire gently dies you fall asleep, images of screaming green-faced trolls flickering through your mind. Suddenly in the bushes to your left you hear the loud crack of a twig breaking under a clumsy foot. You leap up and grab your sword from the ground. You stand motionless but alert, ready to leap on your adversary. Then you hear a groan followed by a dull thud of a body falling to the ground. Is it a trap? . . ."

You'll have to find out by journeying into *The Forest of Doom*. What you have just been reading is an exract from a brand new game in the first of a new range from a totally new software company. Puffin has brought you virtually every book worth mentioning. Now it has decided that there is room for expansion, and has taken the big, if not risky, step into the world of computer games.

Puffin, unlike some new companies I could mention, has steered away from the monotonous arcade shoot 'em ups. Its new games are fantasy-role playing adventures.

These games do resemble your basic adventure, of course. You still have the theme of 'search, destroy and collect'. But there are a few added twists. I'm sure that you have played, or at least heard of, Dungeons and Dragons (D and D for short). This is the game with magic, skill, luck, strength and, most importantly, dice. If you mix this with a good old fashioned quest, plus computer graphics and sound, you'll have some idea of what I'm talking about.

The opening screen is stunningly beautiful. It portrays a large light house-type tower on the right with a brown path leading into a dark knot of trees forming a wood. Above the trees reads the name of the game. And to cheer you up, a glaring skull rests on a tree stump to the left of the picture.

The next screen is a graphical representation of your character sheet. To the left is a good picture of your sword and shield with the sun reflecting off them. The rest of the screen is filled with boxes. There is a big one at the bottom showing what you are carrying. Moving up, two smaller boxes show your food and your jewels. Up from these are more boxes portraying your potion and the pieces of gold you are carrying.

At the very top, you have skill, stamina and luck boxes. To know how much you have of each, roll some dice. This is done by pressing the space bar – the main control in the game. Graphical dice appear and are randomly rolled. When they stop, their score is printed in the three boxes. Then type in your name or one suited for a fierce warrior. The computer will call you "the agile, the lucky or the strong", depending on your score in each of the three categories. The maximum throw for luck and skill is twelve but for stamina it's twenty four.

Now you are almost ready for your adventure. But first I must continue wih the story.

"After the body falls to the ground, you look behind the bush to find a little old man with a bushy beard. He is crumpled in pain, and has several poison-tipped arrows in his stomach. You cover him with your sheepskin blanket and manage to understand his croaking speech.

"His name is Bigleg and he tells of a story about Gillibran, present king of the village, Stonebridge. Bigleg begins to fade, and on his dying breath asks you to collect the four bronze talismans to unite the dwarfs of Stonebridge. He tells you to buy magic items for Yaztromo the wizard. He gives you thirty gold pieces, and then dies."

The talismans were worn by kings of old but then stolen. When Gillibran came to the throne, he had no control over his people without them. Goblins had scattered the talismans around the land.

After finding Yaztromo's castle (the one pictured at the beginning) you pick up some of the magic items and are ready for your journey.

The start. This game hasn't come out of the blue. It was started by Puffin in the form of adventure books. In the books, you were given problems like what to do next – attack or run. In the book you had several options, and your choice decided the next appropriate page.

These books have been very popular. But I am told by some of the players that, after a while, it becomes difficult and annoying. Several pages have to be held down at once, and you can easily get in a tangle. The computer game versions work on the same principle, with a maximum of four options to choose from. But this time it's much easier than the book. Simply press keys 1, 2, 3 or 4.

There is no vocabulary. Instead, the option keys are used. Apart from these four keys and the space bar, there are three function keys plus a few others used for controls.

The game setting is exactly the same as the books: strange lands with the same monsters, the same Blackwood forest and, on the other side of the forest, the same Stonebridge village. However, your quest is different. In the book, you must find two parts of a broken hammer: in the computer game there are four bronze talismans to collect.

Not only is this type of game different, but the way it is presented is unique also. The main difference is music. When you arrive at an interesting location, instead of a graphical picture you get excellent music appropriate to the situation. The music also acts as a warning.

SPECIFICATION

Name: Forest of Doom

Machine: Commodore 64

Supplier: Puffin Personal Computer Collection

Price: £5.50 (£7.50 with book)

Rating: Value	**5**
Graphics	**4**
Sound	**5**
Gameplay	**3.5**

EXCLUSIVE

The Forest of Doom

I haven't solved the game totally. But I have done virtually everything possible in it, and I have found every talisman except one. The third is the one that eludes me.

For the fight sequences, the fifth and final screen is shown. This, like the character sheet, displays several boxes. In the top left and right hand corners are your name and your opponent's name. Then it shows both your stamina and his/hers, followed by skills and luck. The monsters you fight don't need luck.

In the centre of the screen is a largish rectangle with a picture of your enemy; on the whole these are very good and constitute the main graphics in the game. My favourite ones are of the wolves, the shadow changer, the dragon, the hillmen and the werewolf.

Just below this is a space for your dice to roll (press space). During battle, the number on your dice thrown is added to your skill. The same happens with your opponent, and the highest score wins that round. Each round, the loser of the throw is reduced by two stamina points. The one that first reaches zero dies.

Below the dice is a score, showing the reduction in stamina of both players. Finally, below this appear comments on who hit whom, and whether your blows were blocked. While fighting you can escape by pressing E – but you lose two stamina points for cowardice. Or press L for luck; this gives you an extra throw.

HINTS AND TIPS

• The map shows a land separated in the middle by a river and dominated at the top by Blackwood forest. After leaving Yaztromo, you can go east or west. If you go east and do as the crow says, you will have found a route full of monsters, battles and interesting items. This path has more than any other. You will find worms with strength potions, useless ogres, mantraps, ape men with nifty bracelets, poison-spitting pygmies and bees, before you arrive at the water's edge.

By the way, when you get there I hope you'll be nice to horses. But now, unable to retrace your steps, you cannot return to get the talisman. I therefore suggest going west.

• Once you have played the game a bit, you will become used to the routes. There are only four leading to the river. You will then know what items to buy – no more than ten – at Yaztromo's castle to help you on your particular route. The main goods I would recommend are:

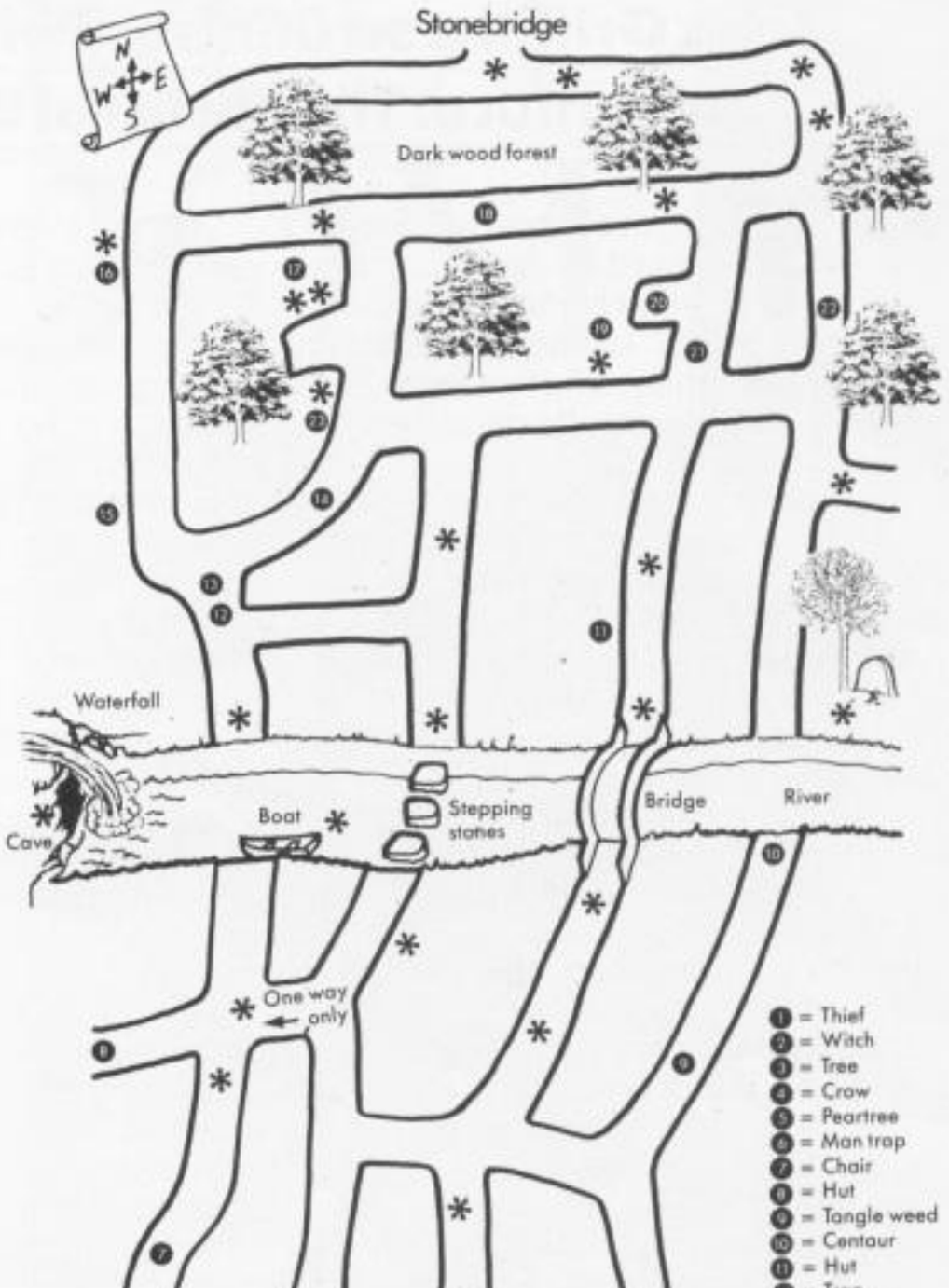
anti-poison pot
plant control
headband of concentration
fire capsules
strength armband (buy if your skill is below eleven).

Buy carefully and leave some room for items to pick up on your travels.

• There are a lot of risks in this game and many battles. Make sure you are strong in all three categories and be as adventurous as possible. Pain can be overcome and is usually hiding an item (or items) that may help you during battle. These add an extra point or two to your skill when fighting and are extremely useful.

• General rules towards the bottom of the map are: don't sit down and don't help anybody else – especially small sinewy creatures.

• The bottom half of the map houses the first talisman, while the top half has the other three. The second is not far from the water (a net could be useful here). The fourth is in the forest to the far north. By the way, do you believe in genies and giants?



• My general tip is, when you are given the chance, try to start a conversation instead of drawing your sword. Search places as much as possible. And don't wade through water – you will lose all your food or be attacked.

On the whole, this game is a refreshing difference from others, with superb music and good graphics. But it isn't perfect. Options make the game a bit limited if slightly easier. And sometimes the computer decides your move, with comments like "You see a mysterious path but decide to continue north". So you are continually forced north, and will miss a lot if you don't go either east or west at the very beginning.

There are a few bugs plus a few weird events. At times I have had no money but had to pay someone – I offered non-existent money and the computer accepted it. Another time I tried this – and suddenly died for no reason. There are a few mistakes in the text with words misspelt and some amusing sentences like "Bigleg was delirious – he then sat up and spoke in his ear". I thought Bigleg was a dwarf, not a contortionist.

The game loads in blocks throughout the play. This is a good idea but a little risky. If your tape deck refuses to load one part, the whole adventure is renewed. This happened to me when I arrived at Stonebridge with only three talismans. □

STAR WARS

Star Wars, The Movie, became the best money-making film of the decade. It was obvious that arcade and computer games would follow – and become best sellers also. But, unlike the movie, Darth Vader may win here. So take Danny Pearson's tips and let "the force be with you."

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away (well, seven years ago) *Star Wars, The Movie* hit the scene. It became the best money-making film of the decade. Since then, there have been many *Star Wars* lookalikes – the tie fighters especially appear in a lot of games.

A few arcade games sprang up looking very close to scenes from the film: *Tailgunner* and *Starhawk*. But it wasn't until 1983 that an official *Star Wars* game hit the arcades. At first, these machines were scarce. But now if you visit an arcade it is more than likely that you will see one.

The machines come in two shapes. The first is a stand up version, and the other comes in the shape of cockpit. The idea of the game is to destroy the death star.

As in the film, this is done by firing a photon torpedo into a small exhaust port. On the way you will confront tie fighters, bunkers, towers and, finally, the trench. The exhaust port is at the end of it. As Luke Skywalker, you must overcome all these and destroy the death star.

When you climb into the cockpit of your X-Wing fighter, displayed on the screen are the instructions, the high scores, and the story of *Star Wars*. After you put your money in (20-30p), the screen displays three death stars, with easy, medium and hard written underneath.

It also displays the bonuses you get for destroying a death star. On the easy level, which starts at wave one, you get no bonus points. On the medium level, which starts at wave three, you get 400,000 bonus points. And on the hard level you get 800,000 bonus points.

The controls on this game are different from any other game. Instead of just a joystick and a button you have two triggers joined in the middle. The triggers can move up and down, and the middle part from left to right. You don't move the X-Wing as you would in, say *M.A.C.H.3*. Instead you move a cursor, so that when you pull the triggers you go where the cursor is.

After the three death stars have appeared on the screen, you must select which death star you want to attack. Simply move the cursor over a death star. When the cursor turns yellow, pull the trigger.

You don't have an amount of lives in this game. Instead you have a certain amount of deflector shields. You usually start with six but this may vary. You lose one shield every time you crash into something.

Like an increasing amount of games these days, *Star Wars* can talk. You may hear phrases from the film. For example, when you lose your first shield Luke Skywalker says "I'm hit but not bad, Artoo, see what you can do with it". When you lose your last shield he says "I've lost, Artoo". Han Solo and Darth Vader also speak.

The top portion of the *Star Wars* screen is split into three pieces. To the right is the wave number you are on. In the middle is how many shields you have left, and on the left is your score.

Underneath the score is the value of the last object destroyed. To destroy anything in the game, you must place the cursor over the target and pull the triggers.

At the start of the game you are flying through space, with tie fighters flying towards you. If you shoot a tie fighter, the middle section explodes, and the wings will fly off. After battling the tie fighters for a minute or two, Luke says "This is red five. I'm going in". Then your X-Wing will

STAR WARS

dive to the surface of the death star. What happens next depends on which level you are playing. You may go straight to the trench or fly over the surface.

Wave one. When you start the game, three tie fighters are flying towards you. Two fly diagonally and one straight at you – you should be able to shoot two of these.

After you have dived to the surface you go straight into the trench. Along the sides of the trench walls are two targets: red and green squares. The red ones are guns – like the tie fighters, they spit fireballs. These should be shot as soon as they come into view. If not, you will find about six fireballs coming at you. The green squares are harmless and are no danger. They act as a warning of when you are about to come up to the exhaust port.

As you approach the port, "Exhaust Port Ahead" flashes on the screen under the shield-remaining indicator. "Yahoo! You're all clear, kid" comes the shout from Han Solo. When you get to the port, place the cursor over it and fire repeatedly. If you hit it, your fighter is hurled into space and the death star will explode. If you miss, you crash through the wall behind the port. This results in the loss of a deflector shield. "Exhaust Port Missed" flashes on screen and you must fly through the trench again.

Wave two starts with three tie fighters coming straight at you. All of them will fire if you let them get close enough. But you should be able to shoot all of them if you are fast.

You may hear Darth Vader say a few words like "Stay in attack formation" or "I'm on the leader". If you do, you should see him very soon afterwards. Unlike the other tie fighters, Darth Vader's cannot be destroyed. Instead, he will spin into space. Darth Vader is worth more points than the other ties: 2,000 points

Darth Vader tends to fly in a zig-zag pattern, rather than in a circle or a straight line like the other fighters. He should be shot as soon as you see him.

After you have dived to the surface you encounter bunkers. These are red, like pyramids with the tops cut off. They shoot fireballs at you, and should be shot as soon as they are in range. A bunker will blow up in several directions when shot, like a tank in *Battlezone*.

As you near the end of the bunkers, your fighter will flip round and enter the trench. This trench is different from the first one. There are catwalks across it. Catwalks cannot be destroyed. You may be able to crash through two catwalks and lose only one shield, but it is better to avoid them. In wave two, catwalks are scarce and pose no real problem.

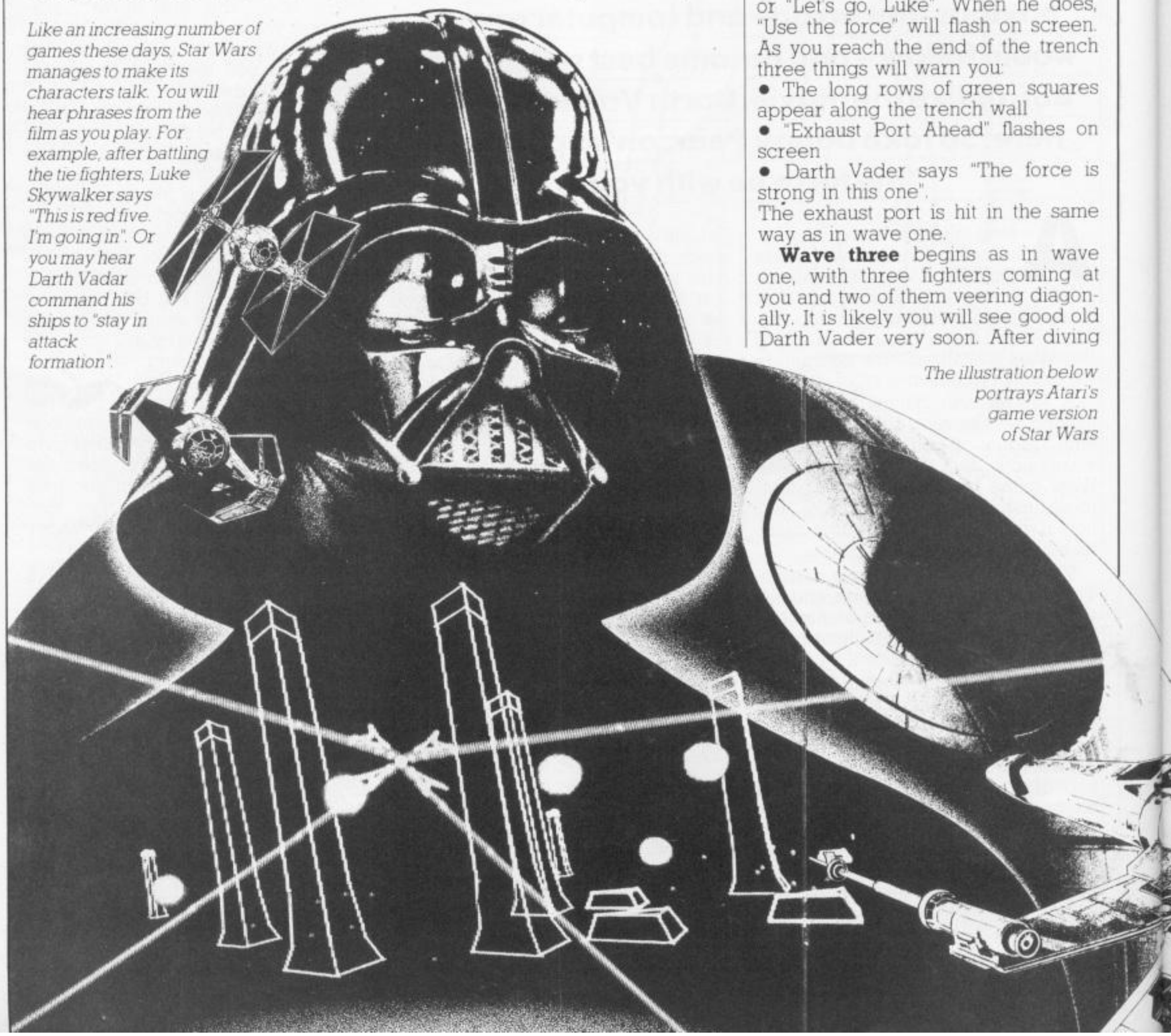
In the trench, the red squares fire – catwalks or no catwalks. From time to time in all the trenches Obi Wan Kenobi will say "Use the force, Luke" or "Let's go, Luke". When he does, "Use the force" will flash on screen. As you reach the end of the trench three things will warn you:

- The long rows of green squares appear along the trench wall
- "Exhaust Port Ahead" flashes on screen
- Darth Vader says "The force is strong in this one".

The exhaust port is hit in the same way as in wave one.

Wave three begins as in wave one, with three fighters coming at you and two of them veering diagonally. It is likely you will see good old Darth Vader very soon. After diving

Like an increasing number of games these days, Star Wars manages to make its characters talk. You will hear phrases from the film as you play. For example, after battling the tie fighters, Luke Skywalker says "This is red five. I'm going in". Or you may hear Darth Vadar command his ships to "stay in attack formation".



The illustration below portrays Atari's game version of Star Wars

to the death star, you will be faced with another threat – towers. Towers are tall and yellow with a white top. Bunkers are also dotted around. Both the white tops and bunkers shoot fireballs at you. Towers are destroyed by shooting their white tops.

Underneath the shield-remaining indicator are two messages. One shows how many points you get for the next tower and the other that you get 50,000 points for destroying all the towers. They're worthwhile targets – but you have to work for your 50,000 points.

There are sixteen towers in all. The numbers of towers left is displayed under the wave number on the right. If you miss one, don't worry. You go through the same set of towers several times before going into the trench. As you get closer to the trench, your X-Wing speeds up, so a good strategy is to destroy the towers on the first few passes.

The third wave trench is more difficult than the second, with the catwalk doubling up and the red targets firing more fireballs. Once again, the exhaust port is destroyed in the same way.

Wave four begins by scrolling sideways instead of up as in the previous waves. It starts with some music from *The Empire Strikes Back* (to all *Star Wars* followers – the Imperial March) which is a bit odd. At first you see only three tie fighters, one of which is Darth Vader's. The two ordinary fighters fly in a circle and towards you. A good strategy from now on is to concentrate on the fireballs rather than the tie fighters. You will know if you are doing it right if you hear Luke say "I can't shake him".

By now the fighters are getting quite fast, and they fire more than one fireball at a time. After diving to the surface, you once again come up against sixteen towers. First, you see four towers straight in front of you: these are shot quite easily. The towers are harder than in wave three because they shoot more fireballs more accurately.

The fourth wave trench is even more difficult, with only just enough room for your X-Wing to get through. This is because at least three catwalks are joined – the trench can take only four. Usually, the gap is either at the bottom or at the top, so you have to really weave up and down.

After you go over the purple triple catwalk, you see the exhaust port. Unlike the others, it has red squares beside it. There are sixteen in all, and most of them fire. After you shoot your photon torpedo, the fireballs disappear. So try and fire as soon as possible.

Wave five starts by scrolling sideways, and again there are three tie fighters. Sometimes one is Darth Vader. Once again, the ordinary tie fighters fly in circles. They fly very fast and are increasingly difficult to hit. "I have you now," Darth Vader intones. At the end of the tie fighter attack, Darth Vader may fly straight at you, letting off a volley of fireballs. If his fireballs don't hit you, his ship probably will. As you dive to the surface you hear the voice of Wedge, Luke's friend: "Look at the size of that thing".

Next you face even tougher towers – and now there are twenty of them. At first you see a long line of about ten towers. You should be able to shoot at least seven on the first pass.

The trench is also ultra hard, with catwalks everywhere. In particular, there are two areas where the catwalks are more concentrated. Once again, there are red squares next to the exhaust port. As you approach this, Darth Vader repeats his phrase from wave two: "The force is strong in this one". If you then hit the exhaust port Han Solo applauds you with "Great shot, kid. That was one in a million".

Wave six starts as in wave four, with the Imperial March theme from *The Empire Strikes Back*. The tie fighters are very fast, and there are a lot of them. Darth Vader is at his very worst. To survive, you must shoot only the fireballs.

From time to time, there may be a break in the tie fighter attack so that only one fighter is on screen. Then you should go for it.

As in wave five, there are twenty towers. Because of the bunkers' fire, it is almost impossible to get a 50,000 point bonus.

The trench is a mix of both wave four and five. It has two areas of concentrated catwalks in the first half of the trench. The second part needs a lot of weaving up and down. After you fly over a yellow triple catwalk and a purple triple catwalk, you come to the exhaust port. As you fly over you will be greeted by about twenty fireballs. If you manage to fire in time, you will move on to wave seven.

Wave seven. Tie fighters are near enough the same as in wave six, except that there are more of them. The towers are also much the same but set out differently. The trench is completely different.

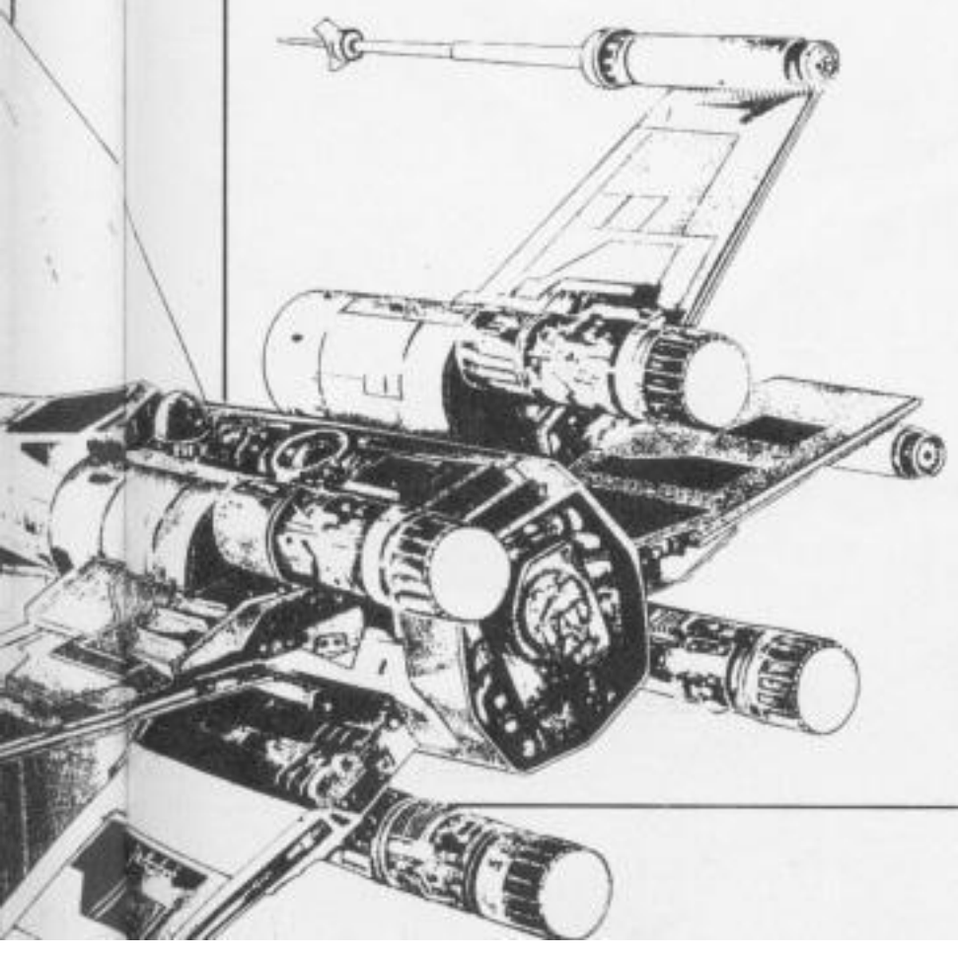
In this wave, a catwalk does not go from edge to edge but over half the trench. There are four of these, so you must weave from side to side. Then come a few chequered catwalks. From now on, the catwalks become easier with plenty of room for your X-Wing to get through.

Wave eight starts as in waves four and six with the Imperial March theme. Three tie fighters are in the distance – one of them is Darth Vader. The fighters are the same as in waves five, six and seven.

In this wave you get twenty-one towers. First you see two towers right in front of you. Behind them will be another five. Behind these lie the rest.

The trench begins with four double catwalks, so you have to weave up and down. Then you come to a lot of concentrated catwalks. That is as far as I have ever been able to go.

My already dwindling supply of shields always receives a fatal hammering and "GAME OVER" flashes on screen. After six months of playing *Star Wars*, my score has reached 1.5million. □



SCORING

TIE FIGHTER	1,000 points
DARTH VADER'S TIE FIGHTER	2,000 points
BUNKERS	250 points
RED SQUARES	100 points
GREEN SQUARES	50 points
FIREBALLS	33 points
ALL THE TOWER TOPS	50,000 points
EXHAUST PORT	25,000 points

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Eureka!

It had to come. With national newspapers offering millions of £££s to readers, a software house is now offering big money prizes to players. But Domark's first adventure is fun, and the best I've played. The idea is to solve the five adventures and ten clues in the accompanying booklet. These give a secret telephone number. Ring and claim your prize – there are two clues in our illustration on page 34.

Travel through time to save the world – and earn £25,000!

Deirdre Boyd gives you the first look at Domark's big-prize game.

Your first adventure takes place in prehistoric times. Leave quickly! The pterodactyl moves in real time.

YOU HAVE EXHAUSTED YOURSELF IN THE ORGY AND FALLEN ASLEEP. YOU WAKE TO FIND THE ROOM SURROUNDED BY PRAETORIAN GUARDS.
YOU'VE FAILED THIS TIME. GO ANYWHERE TO RESTART.

Not a happy scene. You've started the second adventure in ancient Rome. But pleasure came before business.

VIGOUR 84
YOU ARE AT A BRIDGE OVER A SWIFTLY FLOWING RIVER. A ROAD HEADS NORTH.
HERE STANDS THE BLACK KNIGHT. "ONLY A WORTHY MAN MAY CROSS MY BRIDGE" HE SAYS. HE DRAWS HIS SWORD AND ATTACKS YOU.
THE BLACK KNIGHT ATTACKS! YOU ARE HIT!

The third adventure explores King Arthur's era. Again, there is danger. Fight – your vigour is high.

PAPER
I PLAY SCISSORS.
"HAH! I WIN" SAYS SIR MALIN. "YOU MUST JOUST WITH ME NOW."
SIR MALIN EQUIPS YOU WITH A HORSE, ARMOUR AND A LANCE. YOU CHARGE AT EACH OTHER.

Lose the old game of Stone/Paper/Scissors, and you'll be forced to joust with Sir Malin.

An arcade game appears before each adventure. It's optional – but you build up vigour for survival.

YOU ARE IN THE "COOLER", THE CELLS OF COLDITZ IN GERMANY. YOUR SENTENCE IS OVER AND GUARD UNLOCKS THE DOOR.
YOU ARE AT THE NORTH END OF THE DUKE'S CORRIDOR. THERE ARE EXITS EAST AND WEST.

More trouble! It's World War II and you're trapped in Colditz. Remember to wear uniform throughout.

AND MY NUCLEAR WEAPONS I WILL RULE THE WORLD".
YOU ARE AT THE MAHOGANY FRONT DOOR OF THE HOUSE. THE SWIMMING POOL IS TO THE SOUTH AND THERE ARE SOME TREES TO THE EAST. THE SIDE OF THE HOUSE CONTINUES NORTHWARDS.

The last adventure! Safe in his Caribbean hide-away, Von Berg has threatened to blow up the world.

GROUND FLOOR WINDOW OF THE HOUSE. THE DOOR IS TO THE SOUTH AND THERE ARE SOME TREES TO THE EAST. OFF TO THE NORTH IS A GARAGE.
THERE IS RADIATION ALL AROUND EXCEPT TO THE SOUTHEAST AND SOUTHWEST.

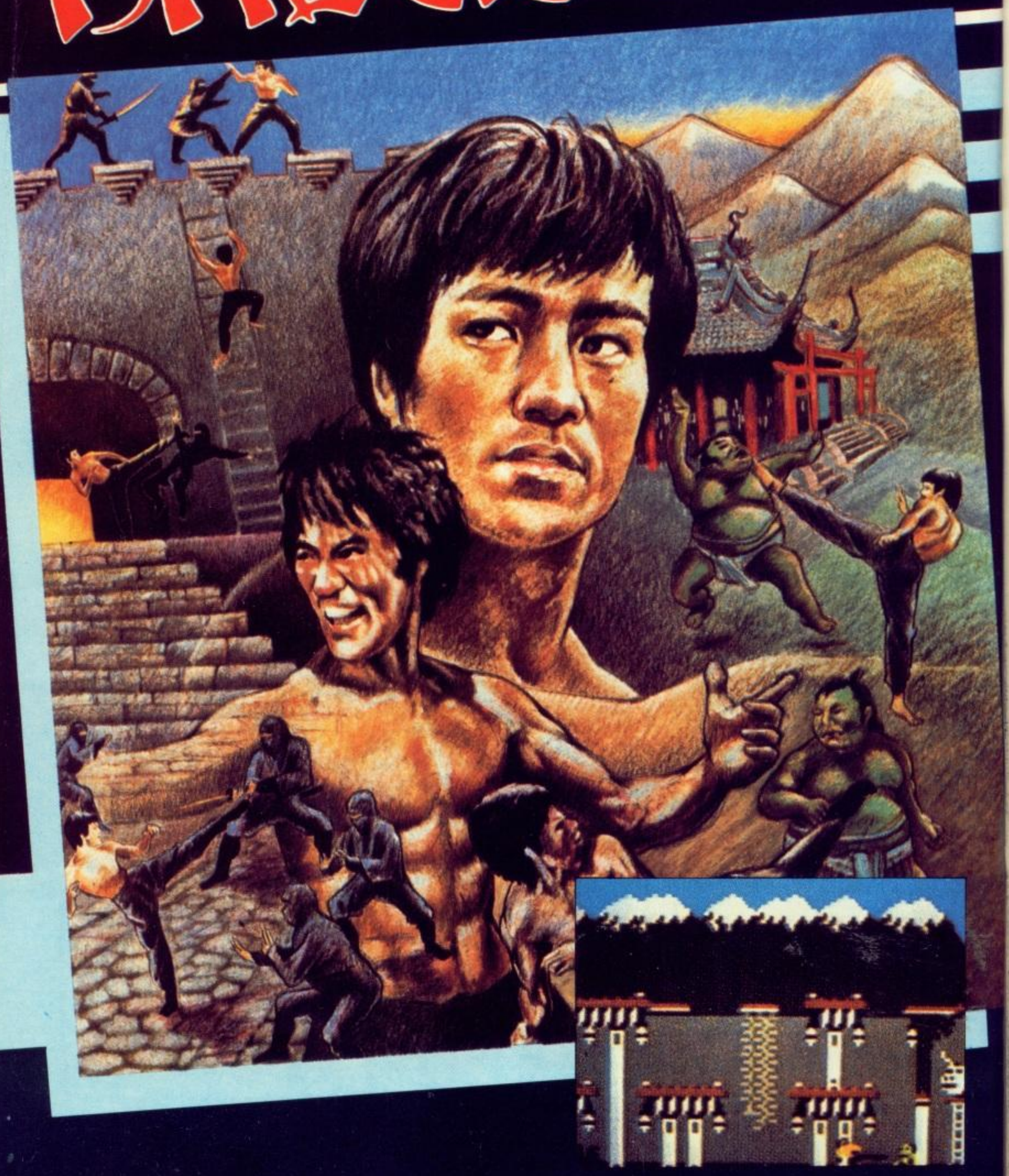
Peer through the windows. But tread carefully. . .a false step will land you on a fatal conveyor belt.

YOU ARE ON A LONG CONVEYOR BELT CARRYING ORE WESTWARDS. JUST TO THE WEST A HUGE HAMMER PULVERISES THE GRAVEL ON THE CONVEYOR.
THE HAMMER HITS YOU AND CRUSHES YOU TO A PULP.

Told you! Turn to page seven for more details on *Eureka!*, available on CBM64 and Spectrum at £14.95.

PHOTOGRAPHS: PHILIP DE-ASHA

BRUCE LEE



How can Bruce Lee fight his way through electric beams, Ninja and Yamo, and other monsters? Darius Mahbouby and Surjit Patel show the way – and how to achieve riches and immortality into the bargain.

SPECIFICATION

Name: Bruce Lee
Supplier: US Gold (Datasoft)
Price: £14.95 disc, £9.95 cassette
Machine: Atari HCS + 32k; Commodore 64 (joystick needed)
Rating: Value 4.5
Graphics 4.5
Sound 3
Gameplay 4.5

Bruce Lee's autoboot game cassette comes in simple packaging with a colourful and very informative card inlay. Not surprisingly, this was done by one of the great Atari programmers – Ron J Fortier who wrote *Zaxxon* for the Atari home computer range.

When loading *Bruce Lee* on the Atari 800 you may have to take a 16k ram board out (the fourth slot). Some versions show a title display of a few words after the first minute of loading. The disk version has a picture of Bruce Lee's face and plays music.

There are four variations in the game.

- One player vs computer – you are Bruce Lee and you play against the computer's green Yamo. You get five lives.
- One player vs opponent – you are Bruce Lee who plays against Yamo controlled by a second player. You get ten lives.
- Two players vs computer – you are Bruce Lee until you lose your current life, then the second player becomes Bruce Lee until a life is lost. You play against the computer's Yamo and get ten lives.
- Two players vs opponent – you take turns in being Bruce and Yamo in this mode. You receive ten lives.

The scoring system on Bruce Lee is as follows.

Lantern	125 pts
Chopping opponent	100 pts
Kicking opponent	75 pts
Entering new room	2,000 pts
Knocking out Yamo	450 pts
Knocking out Ninja	200 pts
Destroying wizard	3,000 pts
Landing on opponent	50 pts

Bonus life at 40,000 pts and others every 30,000.

The game is set in ancient Japan on Mount Fuji. As Bruce Lee, you must penetrate the evil wizard's twenty deadly caverns. These are filled with traps: T'Sung Lin bushes, electrical charges, flying monsters, pan lights and poison spikes. You also have Ninja and Yamo to contend with.

Yamo is very fat (ex-sumo wrestler, probably). He chases Bruce Lee around the screen and delivers flying kicks and karate punches. You will have to kick him three times or punch him six times to knock him out.

Ninja, who is dressed in black, also chases Bruce Lee around the screen. But instead of kicking and punching, he attacks Bruce Lee with a deadly arsenal of weapons. To knock out Ninja, you must punch him four times or kick him twice.

You must also face the wizard. The actual aim of the game is to kill him and claim his enormous wealth.

To get from room to room, you must collect all the lanterns in each room you enter. There are ninety lanterns in the game. Each lantern is worth 125 points.

Before describing each room to you, here's some advice about the many dangers in *Bruce Lee*.

T'Sung Lin bushes can be used to your advantage as well as being the source of your death.

These awesome things appear as mere stems. But when you run over them they grow quickly, killing anyone on the stem or in a half-centimetre radius. But fear not: the trees last for only half a second.

There are no real techniques for avoiding the trees but there are some helpful hints. If you are on one side of the tree and Yamo or Ninja on the other, don't try to kick them. Wait until they run to you and the tree disappears, then you may pass.

Also, as soon as you run across a tree stem, never run back straight away. Trees appear in rooms 9, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15. Room 6 is probably the most lethal.

Flying monsters are easy to dodge. They appear in rooms 7 and 18. Again, there are no special tactics – but as soon as they pass your feet, jump or walk off the edge.

Flying electrical charges require skill to dodge, especially the double ones.

These are the second most common traps. You come across them between the entrance hall and lost caverns: rooms 4, 5, 6 and 8. There is one foolproof way of mastering these futuristic traps. As soon as they pass your feet (or head), jump or drop down. That's that!

Pan lights are the small dots which crawl along the floor. It depends in which scene you are, but on the whole they are deadly.

These require more skill to dodge; the best way is to develop jumping patterns. The pan lights travel in pairs along the dotted floor, occurring in rooms 6, 8, 16 and 18.

White poison spikes are easy to dodge and kill you only if you make an out-and-out mistake or have a fit.

Lanterns are needed to get from room to room. In room 5 touch the lanterns only when they are white.

Scene one. Collect the bottom layer of lanterns quickly. Then climb a quarter of the way up the vine, and wait for Ninja to appear. He will go down and won't be able to climb up again. Quickly go to the top, jump down and collect the other two lanterns. Exit right to appear in the next scene.

Scene two. You will appear in the top or middle left, depending where you entered from in scene one. Try to appear in the middle left as this is easier. Run across and grab the lamp with a leap. Then run and leap on to the right platform, collect that lantern, and descend.

Collect the two lamps on the right, run to the left. Kill Ninja and Yamo if they are there. Collect those two lamps and go to the top of the vine. Climb the next one, then leap across to exit.

Scene three. You will start in the left. Fall onto the platform and get to the left edge. Then leap across, grabbing the two lamps. Leap back onto the platform and go right until you reach the second platform. Grab the two lamps, get to the right edge, and leap to get to the right. Leap to get that lantern.

You will now fall – and Yamo and Ninja will most probably be waiting for you. So keep pulling down on the joystick until you reach the ground. You should be in a ducking position when you get there. Get up – hopefully unscathed – and collect the bottom row of lanterns whilst defending yourself.

Go to the vine, climb to the top, and re-enter scene two. The door right at the bottom should now be open. Go through it.

Scene four. You will enter this scene by dropping in on it. Once you land, quickly go to the right and collect the lamp.

Beat up Ninja and Yamo, then collect the other lamp which is suspended over the gap. You can do this by waiting until the beam just enters the right side, and then leaping.

BRUCE LEE

When you land, go right and jump onto the other ledge, at the same time collecting the lamp. Wait on the side with your foot over the edge. When three quarters of the first beam goes in, jump down.

Go to the left lantern and wait underneath. When the second beam has passed overhead, collect the lamp and the one nearby. Now a passage will have opened.

Collect the rest of the lamps, and yet another door will open. Go through this.

Scene five. You will drop in from the top and fall to the ground. Quickly run across to the particle beam and ascend. Go across to the right platform, wait at the edge until the lamp is white. Then leap across and get it. You will fall to the ground.

Quickly cross to the beam again and ascend. Get onto the left platform and repeat the technique to get the lamp.

On reaching the ground, go to the ladder and climb it. Stand on the side of the wire. Wait until the beam at the bottom crosses, then go down.

Scene six. You will again land from the top. Go to the left, collect the other four lamps, then the single lamp.

Ninja and Yamo will make this scene a real pain for you. The door on the right should have opened. Run towards it; when you reach the second bush, leap over it and stand on the edge. Make sure your foot is not over – that will spell doom.

When the beam reaches the right side, leap into the air over the gap. You should come down safely. Run and collect the lamps. A door should appear on the right-hand side – go through it.

Scene seven. Get to the edge of the platform and wait until the flying monster enters the right-hand side. Then try for a large leap. If all goes well, you should land on a small ledge. Give another large leap to the left, and get that lamp.

Go through the exit which has appeared on the left. You should now be back in room six, in the lower section.

Get to the edge of the pan-light floor. As soon as a pan light appears on the opposite side, run towards it. When it's near, jump over it, run for two seconds, then jump again. Continue doing this until the end.

The lamps will be ready for collection. Get them, and run back into scene seven using the same techniques.

Now go up the particle beam you first met, to the point where you first started. From here jump onto the platform, again using the technique for dodging the flying monster. From here go onto the middle particle beam. Go up this, and get the two lamps.

The door will open on the right-hand side of the beam. As soon as you have passed the white spikes on the way down, push the joystick to the right until you reach the platform safely.

Get to the right hand edge, leap to the right, and get the lamp – another exit will open on the right wall.

Scene eight. You will appear in this room at the very bottom, near the pan lights. Get to the very edge of these – and as soon as one appears, run with it until you reach the other side. Note: there is no jumping.

Quickly cross back to the other side using the same method and return to room seven. Climb the first particle beam you come across, until you reach the top. Then go back into room eight.

Now get to the edge of the surface you are standing on, leap onto the zig-zag particle beam and work your way to the platform. Position yourself so that the foot is just behind the edge. As soon as the top beam enters the right-hand side, leap on a ledge. Now get the lamp, which will open the door.

Leap back to the right ledge and climb up the particle beam to the top where the lantern is. This will change the flow of the particle beam and make it go down. Let yourself down onto the platform, grab hold of the right-hand side particle beam and descend to get the other lamp. Go back up the beam, through the opening that has appeared.

Scene nine. As soon as you appear in scene nine collect the bottom row of two lamps. Then go to the extreme left of the screen and up the vine onto the second floor. First time round, Yamo and Ninja won't follow you up. Collect all the lamps here – a door

INFORMATION TABLE

ROOM NO.	YAMO	NINJA	PAN-LIGHTS	T'SUN-LIN TREES	ELECTRIC BEAMS	FLYING TRAPS	LAMPS	OIL LAMPS	DIFFICULTY RATING
ONE	•	•					•		2
TWO	•	•					•		2
THREE	•	•					•		3
FOUR	•	•			•		•		3
FIVE	•	•			•		•		3
SIX	•	•	•	•	•		•		3
SEVEN						•	•		4
EIGHT			•		•		•		3
NINE				•			•		1
TEN							•		1
ELEVEN	•	•		•				•	2
TWELVE				•				•	1
THIRTEEN	•	•		•				•	3
FOURTEEN	•	•		•				•	4
FIFTEEN	•	•		•				•	3
SIXTEEN			•(x4)						5
SEVENTEEN	•	•						•	3
EIGHTEEN			•			•		•	5
NINETEEN						(FIREBALLS)			4
TWENTY									0

KEY TO THE RATING

5=VERY DIFFICULT 4=DIFFICULT 3=MODERATE 2=EASY 1=VERY EASY 0=NO ACTION REQUIRED

will appear at the extreme left. Go through this.

Scene ten is a repetition of scene four – but you must journey through here to go back to scene two. Get on the particle beam and go through the hatch at the top. If you stop before this, you can get the two lamps. When you do go through the top you will re-enter scene two.

Scene eleven. Scene eleven is a repeat of scene two. Just leap onto the right-hand side and continue into scene twelve.

Scene twelve. This scene repeats scene three. You will notice that the oriental hippo is now making a noise. Go down to the floor and keep on going to the right, under the hippo into scene thirteen.

Scene thirteen. This represents the castle gates. Here you must climb up the grey rope ladder immediately above you, and go onto the wall. There is an alternating bridge which moves from one side to the other.

Get to the edge. As soon as a bridge appears, leap and keep on leaping all the way across the first and second gap. Do not stop for a second on the second bridge. Fall down and get the two lanterns. A hatch in the ground will open.

Scene fourteen. You will start this scene on the bottom floor. Collect the oil lamp, then go up to the next floor and collect the lamps there.

To go up to the next floor, grab hold of the short white vines which grow in between floors. You mustn't activate a T'Sung Lin bush. So just leap onto the vine without treading on the bush.

Go up to the top level next, near the edge, and leap to grab the remaining lamp. This will open the door on the top level; climb back up and go through this.

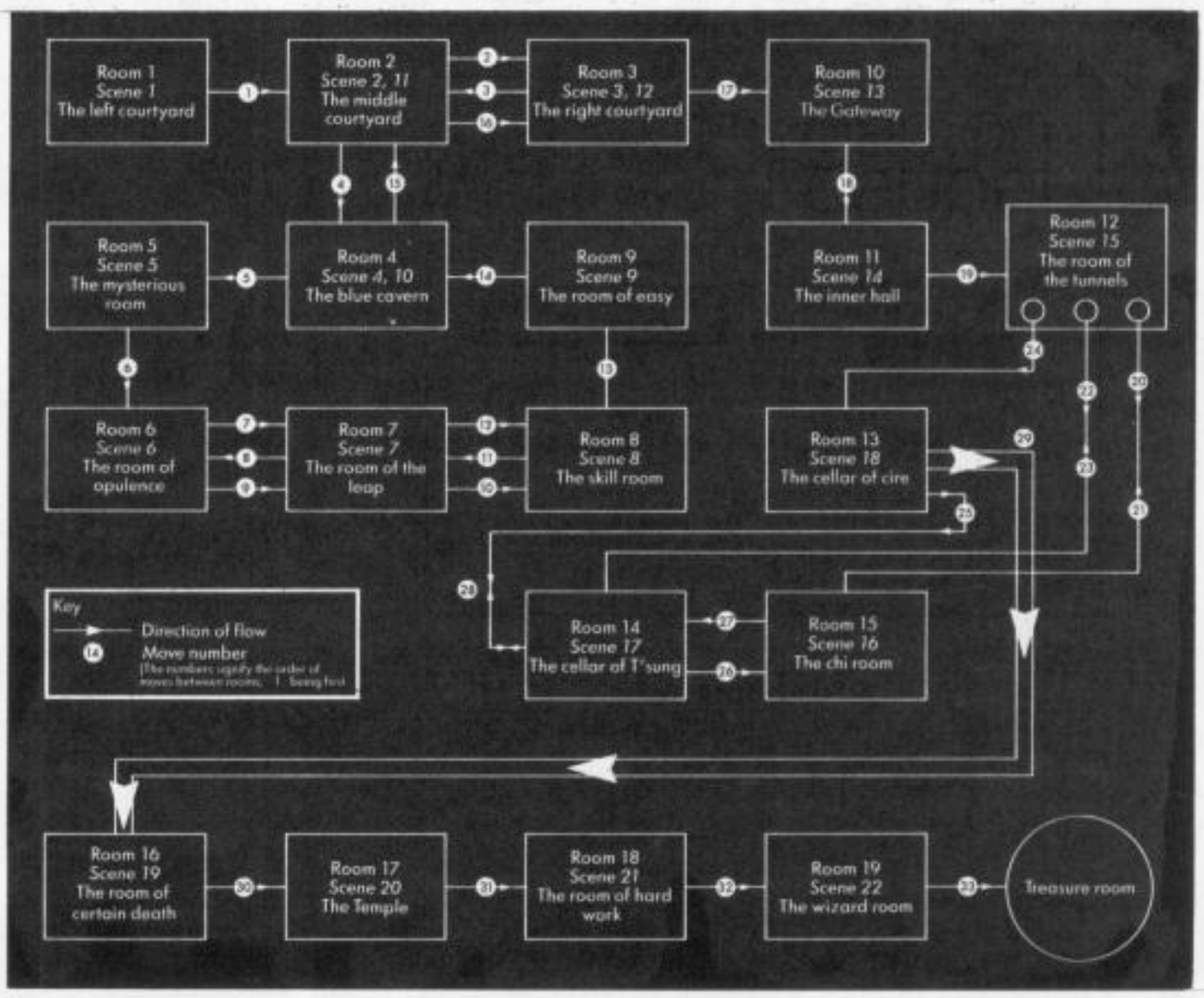
Scene fifteen depicts three tunnels, each of which leads in a different direction. First, travel up the particle beam and get off at the top.

Scene sixteen. You will appear on the top floor on the left. Quickly run to the right and grab the oil lamp. Then descend to get the other lamp. A door will open. Go through this, back into scene fifteen, and take the next tunnel.

Scene seventeen. You will start at the top in the corner. You must get the two oil lamps, then a door will appear in the top right-hand corner. Go through it to return to scene fifteen.

To climb the spiral stairs, keep pushing your joysticks up so that Bruce climbs up in little jumps. When you reach scene fifteen, take the next tunnel.

Scene eighteen. You start the scene on the top floor. First kill Yamo and Ninja. Then leap across the gap onto the right ledge and collect the bottommost oil lamp. This will open a door which will lead into the ground floor sections of scenes sixteen and seventeen.



Enter the ground section of room seventeen only, as this section contains lamps and room sixteen does not.

Quickly rush back into scene eighteen, climb the spiral stairs to the second level, and leap across to get the oil lamp. This lamp will open a door into scene nineteen – the deadliest room, in my opinion.

Scene nineteen. In this scene there are four levels of pan lights. To dodge the first level, wait at the edge. Between a set of two pan lights, leap and then leap all the way across.

On the second level, wait at the edge until a light comes out, then run with it until you reach the centre. Leap the rest of the way across.

The third layer is the hardest. Wait at the edge; when a pan light is about two body-widths away, leap all the way across. Beware! You may fall on a pan light on the fourth level. Simply leap all the way across. If all is well, you will reach scene twenty.

Scene twenty. Go up to the middle of the screen; here will be a short black ladder. Climb up, and then to the top of the temple. Get the two oil lamps there. They are really important: they will open a hatch on the left-hand side.

Get the top lamp, then go down a bit and get the other lamp. Leap down to the ground again, and reascend to the top of the temple.

Go right and get the other two oil lamps. Leap across onto the surface front of the new door.

Scene twenty-one. This is also a deadly room. You appear on the bottom left; run across and grab the lower oil lamp. This will make a magic vine appear. Partially climb this until Bruce's head is level with the top.

As soon as the second trap passes overhead, climb onto the platform. Duck until a trap has passed over you, leap across to the left-hand side platform, then quickly to the left side of the screen. Climb up the vine.

When a flying trap has appeared and is two seconds in front, push your joystick right. Bruce will crawl along the ledge. Make sure he does not get too close to the flying trap.

Continue until the end. Now climb up this vine and stand up straight, near the edge of the pan lights. A trap will come towards you – but will not hit you! When it has gone overhead, wait about a second. Leap across to avoid the pan lights, then climb the magic vine right to the top.

After a trap has appeared, wait two seconds, then move to the right until you reach the end. If there are no traps below you, fall to the bottom, and get the oil lamp. This will make another vine appear, with which you must now climb to the top.

Wizard's room. This is surprisingly easy to do. When you appear, wait a half second or so, then run for your life to the other side of the room, and grab the lamp. This will destroy the wizard. You can now go into the treasure chamber and achieve immortality and eternal wealth.

• **If you want to cheat,** plug a joystick into port two, put your foot on the trigger button and keep it there. Yamo will now stay in one place and will keep on punching. You have only Ninja to deal with. This will make the game easier for you. □

HEROES INC.

By Tim Quinn and Dicky Howett

The GAME so far: Due to a slight military blunder, 358 members of HEROES INC. have just blown themselves to kingdom come. Now the TWO remaining HEROES assess the situation...

IT'S NOT GOING TO BE EASY.

YOU MEAN JUST THE TWO OF US AGAINST ALL THE VIDEO NASTIES TROONCING THE WORLD, AL?

NO! IT'S NOT *THAT*, TELETRON. I MEANT JUST THE TWO OF US HAVING TO WRITE ALL THE TRIBUTES FOR THE *DEAD* HEROES!

SCRIBBLE

HOW'S THIS SOUND..? "HE WAS A MAN WHO KNEW THE MEANING OF THE WORD **SUPERBOMB**.. AND LOTS OF OTHER BIG WORDS TOO".

NOT BAD. HOW ABOUT THIS ONE.....? "WHEN IT CAME TO THE CRUNCH, HE DIED A MAN — SOMETHING HE'D BEEN SINCE HE STARTED PLAYING COMPUTER GAMES!"

SUDDENLY...

HEY! WHAT'S *THIS?!*

JUST *RELAX!* ACT **NATURALLY!** WE'RE FROM **CHANNEL 4** MAKING A FILM ON *YOU* AS PART OF OUR **'MINORITY GROUP'** SEASON.

SHIRRR

JUST ACT NATURALLY... JUST AS IF WE WEREN'T HERE. WE WON'T GET IN THE WAY..... STAND BY..... **ACTION!**

AND..

AS YOU KNOW, THE **PAC-MEN'S** MAIN *WEAPON* IS THEIR HUGE **APPETITE**. THIS **ELECTRONIC GIZMO** I'VE KNOCKED UP WILL *WIPE OUT* THEIR **HUNGER** LEAUING THEM HARMLESS.

ANOREXIC *PAC-MEN?* SOUNDS GOOD!

AS THERE ARE ONLY **TWO** OF YOU LEFT NOW, YOU'VE **BECOME** A MINORITY GROUP!

ARTY SHOT →

THERE'S A LOT OF US ABOUT.

MAKE UP

PROD

WELL... **OKAY**.. *ERM*. BETTER GET DOWN TO BUSINESS. I'VE AN **IDEA** HOW TO *DEFEAT* THE **PAC-MEN**...

PAUL HOWETT

GO TO IT **TELETRON!** YOU'LL FIND THE **OPERATING DETAILS** IN THE **INSTRUCTION MANUAL!**

"THE AL CHEMIST PATENTED ELECTRONIC GIZMO..."

"HOLDING SIDE PANEL **'E'**, GENTLY RELEASE LEVER **'R'** WHILE PUSHING BUTTON PYE SQUARED TO THE CONSTANT POSITION AND TURN **'P'** TO POINT **'S'**. DEPRESS BALLCOCK **'H'** AND AFFIX DECALS...

...USING A 20P COIN, TWIST LID OFF AND ALIGN SIGHTS WITH TARGET.. PRESS TRIGGER AND RETIRE..

THAT'S **STRANGE**... NOTHING'S HAPPENED. PERHAPS I *MISSED* SOMETHING IN THE INSTRUCTIONS. **AH**, WHAT'S THIS IN **SMALL PRINT** AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE...?

"BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED.."

BATTERIES NOT **INCLUDED!?** OH MY....

CLIK! CLIK! CLIK!

So WELL? WHAT **HAPPENED?** DID MY **ELECTRONIC GIZMO** *WIPE OUT* THE **PAC-MAN'S** HUNGER AND LEAVE HIM HARMLESS?

HE'S LEFT *ME* PRETTY **'ARMLESS** THOUGH!

SORRY TO BE A **BORE**, DARLINGS, BUT THE **LIGHT'S** GOING. I THINK WE'LL HAVE TO LEAVE IT THERE FOR NOW AND **RE-SHOOT** THE LAST SCENE AGAIN FIRST THING IN THE MORNING.

I DUNNO- HE **ATE** IT!

GLOOP!

Next: SELINA SCOTT goes on a rampage!

PENGWYN
Machine: BBC B
Supplier: Postern
Price: £6.95
Type of game: skill
The program loads in three parts without trouble. Pressing any key produces a screen partially filled with blocks of ice, three of which are flashing. Pengwyn has three lives and a Welsh daddy . . . a red pengwyn!

The object of the game is for Pengwyn to push the three randomly placed flashing ice blocks into line. He can melt his way through the rest of the ice blocks (by pressing RETURN), if they are causing an obstruction. Or he can shift them into an available space.

Making this more than a gentle afternoon's work for our polar chum are the nasties, friendly sort of *Pac-Men*. Initially, two of them advance on chirpy little Pengwyn who has two defences. These are rather deft foot-work, and the more extreme resort of pushing an ice block over the advancing nasty.

This latter action flattens them, and gives him a breather to get on with the work. But more nasties appear at random locations to reconverge on Pengwyn. The number of nasties increases as you become more proficient.

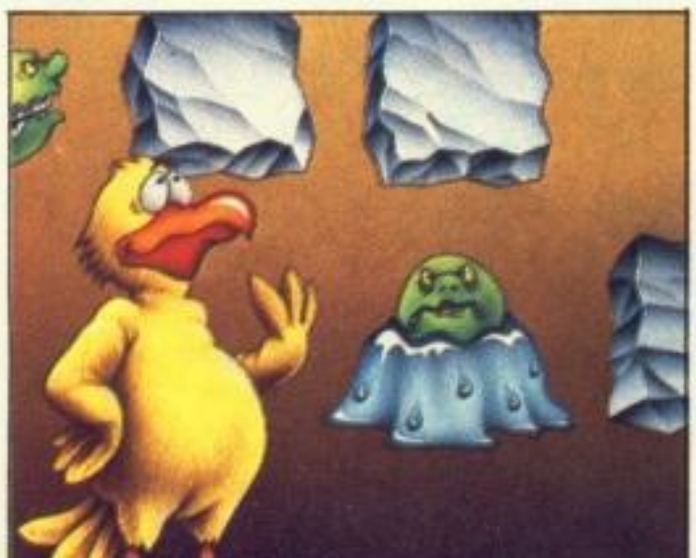
Pengwyn is moved by the usual keys: Z, /, X and :.

This is not my favourite type of game, but I found it quite a challenge. My interest was ensured by the fairly quick nature of the game, and by the absolutely superb 3-D animation of Pengwyn himself.

He is fully defined, front, back and sides, so that every movement he makes appears true to life. His final death throes are hilarious; the programmer must be a western fan. I use the male gender because no self-respecting female Pengwyn would ever give up the ghost with her legs in the air quite like our little lad.

Francis Duffin

Value 3.5
Graphics4
Sound 3
Gameplay 4



November GAME REVIEWS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

TV Gamer's review panel takes an honest look at the bewildering choice of computer and dedicated-machine games flooding the shops. We recommend what to buy – or avoid! Above all, enjoy your game.

JUNGLE JIVE

JUNGLE JIVE
Machine: BBC B, Electron
Supplier: Virgin Games
Price: £6.95
Type of game: skill
Walking through the jungle, you suddenly realise that you aren't alone. Looking around, you will see that you are surrounded by blue baboons, pink elephants and red rhinos (weird jungle).

The point of the game is to shoot all the animals. But you must beware of shooting the baboons. They must survive, but they still cause as much hassle as any other animal. You can travel only up and down the centre of the screen, shooting to your left and right as you go.

I found the Electron version almost impossible to play, but the BBC version is better. This is an original game, but after a couple of plays boredom settles in. If you are thinking of buying this game for your Electron, be warned. There are better games around.

Chris Blatch

	Electron	BBC
Value:	1	2
Graphics	3	2
Sound	2	3
Gameplay	1	2

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

DEVIL BIRD
Machine: CGL/Sord M5 (Basic 1 or 6)
Supplier: CGL Software
Price: £5.95
Type of game: sci-fi shoot 'em up
Devil Bird can be described only as a simple adaptation of the arcade game *Phoenix*. I wouldn't consider it to be a translation.

One bird-shaped invader comes down at a time for you to shoot with your laser cannon. The reactions from the keyboard to your laser are quick. But it's not easy to dodge the invaders' fire, because it's so fast. After a while, you can learn to watch out for their fire and it's no longer a problem.

The graphics are quite acceptable, and the invaders are rather good. But your cannon is just a pyramid shape.

The overall concept is good. Unfortunately, with invaders coming down one at a time, it becomes too easy after a while.

Devil Bird is a nice game to play, and I expect some people will get a lot of enjoyment from it. It's not my cup of tea, but if you like shoot 'em ups, this one may be for you.

Paul Bessant

Value 3
Graphics 3
Sound 2
Gameplay 4

HI BOUNCER!
Machine: BBC B (joystick optional)
Supplier: Mirrorsoft
Price: £6.95
Type of game: skill
I've played very few original games since I bought my Beeb, but *Hi Bouncer!* is likely to change all that. Like Mirrorsoft's previous hit, *Caesar the Cat*, this one is totally original and addictive, possessing all the speed and excitement of an arcade game.

Set in the land of the Mr Men, you play the part of Roger Hargreave's character, Mr Bounce. His task is to leap around town helping all his friends. There are four different screens, each with eight levels of play. They increase in difficulty and require different tactical approaches to successfully complete them.

Screen one features Mr Tall who can't reach his gloves and scarf. Help Mr Bounce catch them by landing on them feet first.

Screen two shows Mr Lazy who's too idle to finish building his house. If you can land Mr Bounce feet first on the see-saw, you'll soon get things moving.

Screen three has Mr Bump who's too bruised to knock any more fruit off the trees. Help Mr Bounce jump up and catch the fruit – and I do mean catch. You've never seen fruit move like this before. Every time you think you've caught some, it moves off to another part of the tree.

Screen four is a sunny day. In fact, it's so hot that poor old Mr Snow is melting. Help Mr Bounce reach those clouds so he can shield Mr Snow from the heat.

Of course, in a game as good as this, there are hazards to avoid. These include birds, puddles, falling fruit, see-saws and the ever-present Mr Men who always try their best to hinder you from your task. Contact with any of these hazards has you shooting about all over the screen, and losing one of your three lives. But you get an extra life at 1,000 points.

The graphics are superb, and portray the Mr Men just as they appear in the TV series. Colour has been used extensively and gives a great effect to the 3D and 2D screens. Animation is smooth and flicker free, just like cartoons.

There are also some nice humorous touches. For instance, if you go near Mr Lazy when he's asleep he'll get up with a rather annoyed look. If you leave him alone, he'll go back to sleep again.

Sound is a bit scarce apart from a nifty little tune that introduces every game.

I know many battle-hardened games players might say that it looks simple, and is only kid's stuff. But, believe me, from the second level onwards the action really starts to hot up. It's so tough that a separate seven-level practice program has also been included for kid brother or inquisitive parent.

Congratulations to H&H Software and Mirrorsoft for providing a game that is fun, addictive and should appeal to every member of the family.

Waseem Asghar

Value 4.5
Graphics 4
Sound 2.5
Gameplay 4

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

POTTY PIGEON
Machine: Commodore 64
Suppliers: Gremlin Graphics
Price: £7.95
Type of game: skill
Potty Pigeon is the latest piece of software from Tony Crowther and, as usual, it's superb.

The aim of the game is to fly Percy the pigeon over a beautifully scrolling landscape, six screens wide, collecting twigs for his nest. These twigs are situated in the middle of the road, and must be collected quickly – whilst avoiding cars that move in both directions.

With a twig safely in his beak, Percy must take it back to his nest – taking care not to collide with the homing pigeons. If he hits one, he loses his prize.

Contact with the cats or any other hazard means the loss of one of his three lives – an extra life is awarded at 10,000 points.

The hazards include planes, cats, weasels and balloons. Bonus points can be obtained by eating butterflies, or blowing up the cars by realising an exploded egg. There are ten levels, each level bringing added hazards and faster play.

The graphics are beautifully detailed and the sound is also good. The gameplay is hectic, especially in the later stages. There are a few 'safe' spots, and once these are found things get a lot easier.

Overall, *Potty* Pigeon is an excellent, addictive game that should keep you amused for many hours.

Michael Boyce

Value 4
Graphics 4.5
Sound 4
Game play 4.5

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

FLAK
Machine: Commodore 64
Supplier: Funsoft
Price £14.95 disc, £9.95 cassette
Type of game: shoot 'em up
Prepare for battle, make sure your trigger finger is in condition, refreshment close at hand, and a dependable alarm clock and two matchsticks for the morning after staying up most of the night attempting to reach the penultimate phase of *Flak*. An achievement which I have failed to do despite many late night sorties with the enemy.

The idea of flying an aircraft over enemy territory, avoiding the flak and bombing the bunkers is far from original. But this is by far the best version I've seen.

Choose levels and take off. The terrain looks a bit one-dimensional, but this is soon forgotten as the ultra-smooth scrolling and fast action commences.

A truly addictive game with the added incentive of the high-score table being updated on disk.

JP Thompson

Value 4
Graphics 3
Sound 3
Gameplay 4

November GAME REVIEWS

BLUE THUNDER

Machine: Commodore 64 (joystick optional)
Supplier: Richard Wilcox Software
Price: £6.95
Type of game: combat/skill

In *Blue Thunder* (your mission codename), you are piloting a helicopter through a variety of perils. It is, as ever, a scoring game, beginning in *Falcon Patrol* style with the helicopter being fuelled. In this case, it fuels aboard a sea vessel. Three lives are allowed.

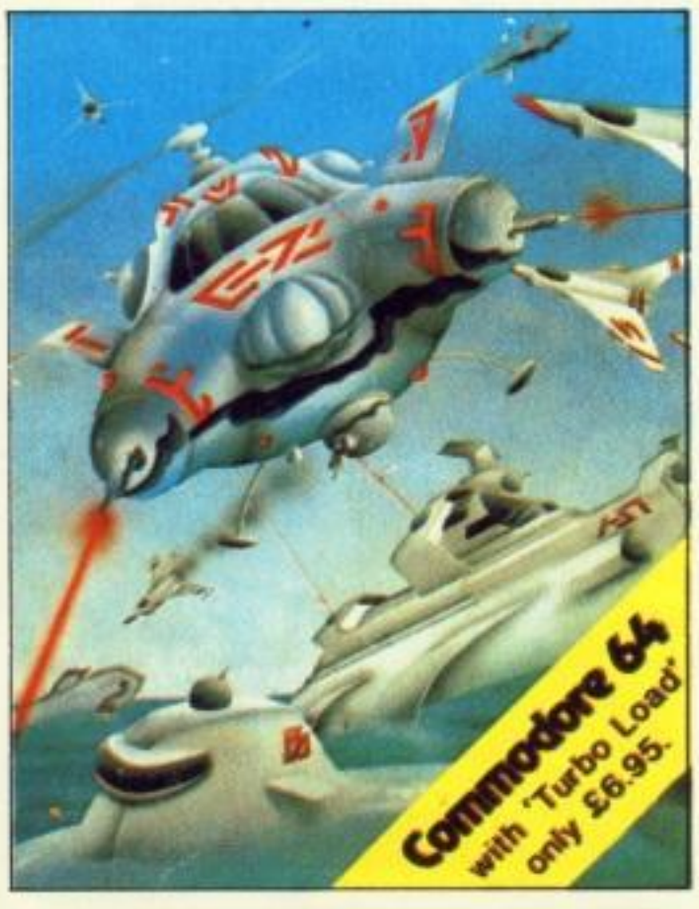
After turbo-loading, the game scrolls from left to right. Hovering is achieved by swivelling your craft around to face the front. Speed is increased by briefly pressing the direction controller in the direction of motion.

The first peril is the clouds. But these are no ordinary clouds. You are in the midst of an electronic storm – so steer clear! Also avoid diving down into the sea.

Having escaped surface-to-air missiles and armoured ships, you must negotiate the defensive screen which protects a remote island. There your comrades are being held captive. The screen is in the form of a vertically oscillating object which you blast with your lasers. This done, proceed to the island – where a nuclear reactor looms ominously beside your companions' place of imprisonment.

As a second shield prevents your safe passage, you must destroy the reactor shield (yes, another shield!), and enter the reactor room with appropriate timing to avoid the periodic fire from a short-range lethal cannon. Then drop a bomb on the nuclear pile to blow it up.

The way is clear, so you fly over the reactor and gently lower your 'copter onto a landing pad. By this time, tiny white men have begun filing into your craft. Precisely how many you can pick up is determined by the time delay before a rapidly



expanding balloon appears. It will drop a bomb directly overhead. If you are hit, a life is lost. Points corresponding to the number of men rescued are awarded.

Now the screen automatically changes its direction of pixel scrolling. You must return to base to safely deposit your comrades, no more than sixteen of whom can simultaneously occupy the helicopter. The previous hazards are now re-encountered in reverse order. But you no longer get points for destroying armoured barrage balloons.

If your fuel supply becomes severely depleted, a warning siren is sounded. Automatic refuelling takes place on delivery of passengers. Incidentally, the stockpile of bombs and laser blasts is unlimited. You have completed mission one, and must now begin the next.

Though its purpose is the same as before, the perils, speed and frequency of missiles have increased. You must dodge waves of jet fighters. The surest way is to drop down to just above sea level. Also, there is a new variety of ground-based missiles to be avoided. These cannot be destroyed.

Submarines now also appear. If you can bomb them quickly, well and good. If, as is more likely, you don't, one of them unleashes an airborne homing device at you. Either you destroy it, or vice versa.

In successive missions, the general speed and number of foes increase. If you wish, you may begin the game by pre-selecting your own choice of mission: one to four. Mission five may be accessed only by completing mission four.

Blue Thunder is quite a nice game which makes good use of sound, particularly the helicopter's rotor blades. But it does not fully realise the graphics capabilities of this computer. Nevertheless, it does load very quickly and is a good buy. Recommended.

Farooq Agha

Value 4
Graphics 3
Sound 3
Gameplay 4.5

DARE-DEVIL DENNIS II

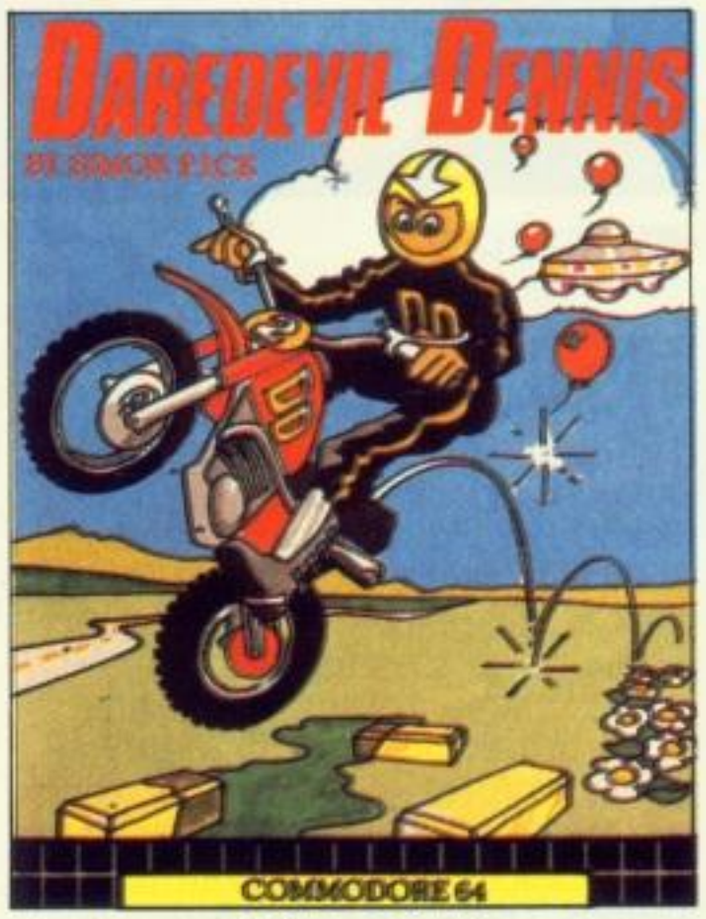
Machine: Commodore 64 (+ joystick)
Supplier: Visions (Software Factory)
Price: £7.95
Type of game: skill

Poor Dennis! He has been fired from the BBC. And his Oscar, which he won for being the worst stuntman on TV, has been stolen by his cousin, Decidedly Daft Douglas.

Dennis then receives a letter saying that, if he wants to see his Oscar again, he must meet his cousin in the Commodore 64.

Dennis obeys. But he must cross a field of flowers and floating balloons before reaching his destination. He has to jump up to pop the balloons and avoid crushing the flowers.

Reaching the rendezvous, Dennis finds that Douglas has built a film set with old co-stars. He has also smashed the Oscar, fixing the pieces



to balloons which scatter them around the scenes. On his motorcycle, Dennis must avoid various objects as he collects the pieces of Oscar to put them back together again.

Added to the objects to be avoided is the hazard that these objects, and the pieces of Oscar, are placed on scaffolding. The various levels are reached by Dennis performing stunts on his motorcycle. Six levels of skill and many levels of difficulty are available.

There are some excellent graphics, with an ample supply of good sound effects. An original death sequence and catchy tunes accompany this program. The game is good, but I did not find it addictive. I believe it might be more enjoyable for children under eleven years.

This game is totally controlled by a joystick in part two.

Deborah Lander

Value 2.5
Graphics 4.5
Sound 3
Gameplay 2.5

GEMS OF STRADUS

Machine: Amstrad CPC464
Supplier: Kuma Computers
Price: £7.95
Type of game: graphic adventure

This is a 3D graphic adventure from Kuma Computers. You must explore Stradus, home of the great AM, and locate the trove room where the gems of Stradus are to be found.

You move with the cursor keys. Commands are via the keyboard: PICK UP, DROP, USE, and others. The game loads in two parts. Part one is a set of comprehensive instructions. Part two is the game itself.

The screen is split into three sections: one part for viewing, another for information, and the third for your responses. The graphics are well done, with a myriad of objects scattered around the maze.

Some of the rooms will transport you into a different room. Others contain deadly objects to solve particular problems – but which object for which is another story! When I got stuck on one particularly lethal problem, I phoned Kuma Computers. The people there were most obliging in their response. Thank you, Kuma!

All in all, I liked this adventure for its good use of graphics, sound and plenty of colour. An enjoyable game.

Andrew Marshall

Value 3
Graphics 3.5
Sound 3
Gameplay 3

To make things easier for our readers, below is a list of the pages on which you will find reviews for your machine. BUT NOTE: most games are being converted to run on popular machines. Keep all TVG reviews even if the game is not for your machine – it's likely it may soon be.

GAMES	Pages
Amstrad	45, 47
Atari	48, 53
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Dragon	51
Electron	42
Spectrum	50, 53, 54
Vic 20	47, 48, 50, 51, 53

LASER REFLEX

Machine: BBC B
Supplier: Talent Computer Systems
Price: £7.95
Type of game: sci-fi shoot 'em up

Laser Reflex from Talent Computer Systems is a novel game on the *Space Invaders* theme. In your laser tank, sited in a galactic power station, you must blast the oncoming attackers intent on the destruction of your base. To do this, you must bounce your laser fire off a radar dish. So you need to know your angles.

If you miss an attacker, it kamikazi's your base, making a hole in the structure. If another one is missed, it may sneak through the hole. You will lose a quarter of a life.

The excess of graphics makes it difficult to see your tank in the jumble of power generators and laser fire. The idea of bouncing the laser off a radar dish hasn't really worked, because it slows the game down.

Overall, *Laser Reflex* is good but lacks that certain something which makes a best seller.

John Bradford

Value 3
Graphics 3
Sound 2
Gameplay 2

What does it take to be a computer video and games reviewer?

If you look behind the scenes at some of TV Gamer's panel, you'll discover that only one thing is common to them all: a devotion to games.

If you want to know more, every month we'll introduce you to the members of TV Gamer's review panel – there are seventy in all.

Graham Cook
Age: 28
Hobbies: writing, reading/watching science fiction, any type of game (especially computer strategy games), my cat, classical music
Pet like: my wife, my computer, my games, my cat and food – not necessarily in that order!
Pet hate: women who clear their handbags out at 2 am and £40 programs which don't load
Best game: Wizard of Wor (Roklan) closely followed by Ultima III (Origin Systems) – at last solved!
Worst game: Hellcat Ace (Microprose) and Attack of the Mutant Camels (Llamasoft)

Stuart Croot
Age: 14
Hobbies: playing tennis and computing
Pet likes: tennis and football
Pet hate: soap operas
Best game: M.A.C.H. 3
Worst game: Asteroids

Karl Flower
Age: 12
Hobbies: swimming, reading and Dungeons and Dragons
Pet like: computing
Pet hate: my two elder sisters
Best game: Overdrive
Worst game: Johnny Reb

Farooq Agha
Age: 17
Hobbies: computer programming, air rifle shooting, driving, playing chess, DIY improvements, making pencil portraits and maintaining an extensive video library
Pet like: making it a point to eat chinese food whenever I'm abroad
Pet hate: people who regard themselves as an authority on subjects they have only just become interested in
Best game: Donkey Kong
Worst game: Star Strike (Intellivision)

Steve Wetherill
Age: 21
Hobbies: music, fantasy books (Tolkien, etc), electronics.
Pet like: Foster's lager
Pet hate: getting up
Best game: Lunar Jet Man.
Worst game: Arcadia (Imagine)

S Roberts, 25
Hobbies: computer games, half-marathons, tennis, swimming
Pet like: computers
Pet hate: training for half-marathons
Best game: Hunchback
Worst: Revenge of Mutant Camels

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HOLDFAST
Machine: Amstrad CPC464
Supplier: Kuma Computers
Price: £7.95
Type of Game: strategy
This new game from Kuma is a "train" game. You are the leader of the rebellious village of Holdfast, a part of Dictatoria. You must campaign to raise enough support to force the government of Dictatoria to give in to your demands – namely build a new school and clinic.

You have various options to choose from, including negotiation, non-cooperation, and civil disobedience. Or, of course, you could take no action at all.

During the course of the game, newsflashes and bulletins are displayed on the screen, teleprinter style. You also receive information about the government and philosophical quotes from Mahatma Gandhi.

The villagers give up when their determination is low. But if you carry out a good campaign you can defeat the government. It took me two whole days of trying to get the government to listen to reason. Only after an epic struggle of twenty-one weeks did it finally concede.

This game is all text, and I noticed a few flips of sound here and there. I also noticed some mistakes in the game, notably in the ultimatum. If, unlike myself, you like a thinking game with no sound or graphics, then this is the game for you. Rather more suited to adults.

Andrew Marshall

Value 1.5
Graphics N/A
Sound 1
Gameplay 2

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

FLIP AND FLOP
Machine: Commodore 64
Price: Cassette £8.95, disk £10.95
Type of game: maze/chase
You'll flip for this game or it'll be a flop. If you're tired of playing *Q*bert*, and *Q*bert* wants a rest, then try your hand at this. You portray two characters, Flip the kangaroo and Mitch the monkey. If you found *Q*bert* easy to control, then just try to figure out the controls for this game.

The screens of the game are all in 3D, and so are all the characters, apart from the net. You have thirty-six screens to contend with. The first two screens are the same and are quite easy after a couple of goes.

Playing Flip is very easy, but Mitch is hard. After Flip's screen, it is Mitch's turn. This has the same maze. But now you're upside down and it's hard to figure out how to move.

After the first two screens, more problems appear. Not only are the mazes more difficult, a zoo keeper is after Flip and a net is after Mitch. The only way to stop them is by dodging, or trapping them on sticky squares.

I don't know whether *Q*bert* has any variation of its pyramid maze. In my opinion, *Flip and Flop* is more fun.

Mohammed Azhar

Value 3
Graphics 3
Sound 3
Gameplay 4

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

ASTRO-CHASE
Machine: Commodore 64 (requires joystick)
Supplier: Statesoft
Price: £8.95
Type of game: sci-fi shoot 'em up
On first loading this game, I was greeted by a Spectrum-style loading screen. The whole screen was flashing in a multitude of different colour lines which changed into an American flag with the name of the game below. This remained even as the game continued to load.

The game begins with a graphically superb screen in which an astronaut leaves a hut and marches over to the launch-pad. There, he is beamed up to his spacecraft and lifts off into space.

The ship has been transported into the immediate space zone around the earth, which seems peaceful enough. But alien craft soon start attacking and draw you away from your task of protecting the earth and its inhabitants.

As you pursue, relentlessly protecting your beloved planet, you quickly realise that you are running short of energy. This is due to firing, crashing, using the shield, and other energy-consuming exploits. After re-energising you are back into action and ready for anything!

Astro-Chase is a very exciting game with excellent graphics and superb sound – the 1812 Overture by Tchaikowsky. The SID chip in the Commodore is used to get really good sound effects on collisions, explosions, and shield-on. Definitely a game for any space-fighter or anybody who likes a good challenge.

David Maher

Value 4
Graphics 4
Sound 4.5
Gameplay 4

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

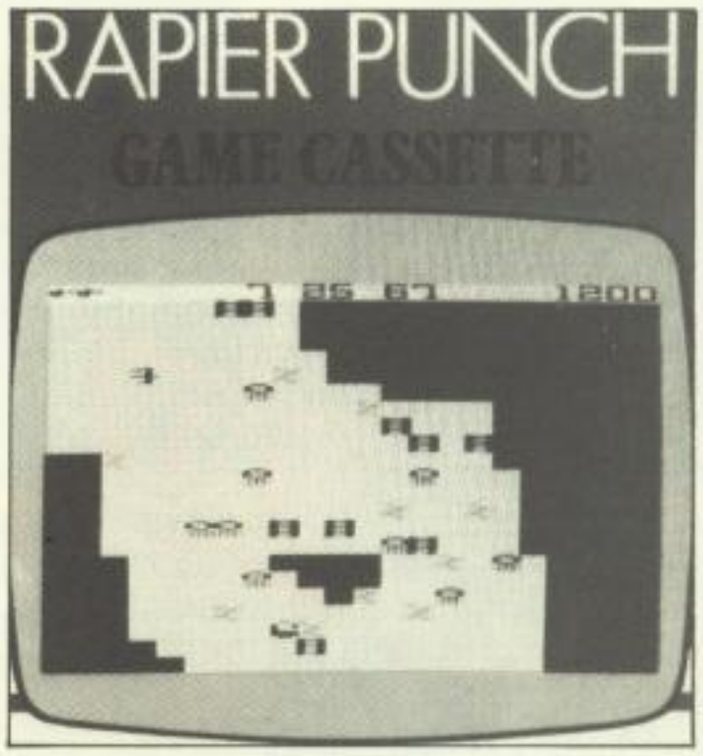
RAPIER PUNCH
Machine: Vic 20 (+ joystick)
Supplier: Commodore
Price: £4.99
Type of game: adventure shoot 'em up
In *Rapier Punch*, you have sword, have travel. You must fight your way through a darkened room to find a valuable treasure chest.

At first, only a small amount of the room can be seen. But as you begin to move onward into the unknown, more of the room reveals itself to you, and weird shapes can be seen.

Barriers block your path. Spinning crosses pose no immediate threat, unless, of course, you 'bump' into them. If this should happen to your foolhardy knight, he is promptly thrown onto his back, treated to a display of flashing screen colours, and buried six foot under with a cross to show where he took his last steps. Dramatic stuff!

It's now time to start with another knight, and have a better try at finding that kettle-shaped treasure chest.

When at last you do find this treasure chest, you are awarded the well deserved sum of 1,000 points,



plus a bonus of 10 x the time left. When your score reaches 10,000 points you are given an extra life. But more meanies join the crew.

These are dragon's eggs and the dragons themselves. Neither look like the characters they're supposed to be. The dragons look more like snakes than any other winged, fire-breathing fiend I've ever heard of!

Once again, more of those famous 3.5K cheap but cheerful graphics are used. And for once the sound is audible. Other touches add to the enjoyment of the game. One is a line of knights moving almost in time with a signature tune. Another is an infinite lives facility, which allows you to carry on where you left off at exactly the same number of points and skill level.

All in all, this is a very good game, and one that I would definitely recommend.

Lee Mallinder

Value 3.5
Graphics 3.5
Sound 3
Gameplay 4

November GAME REVIEWS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

GRAB IT
Machine: Commodore 64 (+ joystick)
Supplier: Voyager
Price: £6.50
Type of game: skill
After having waited eagerly to see this game, I must confess to being rather disappointed.

Graphics and sound are quite pleasing, but this is a very hard and infuriating game to play. It is turbo loading, requires a joystick and has a two-player option. There are six screens to choose from, going automatically to the next screen if successful.

You control an alien who must collect eight items embedded in a wall at the bottom of the screen. He does this by sliding over them to pick them up, and then returning them to his space ship at the top of the screen.

There is nothing to shoot at. But on screen one you must avoid, at all costs, a yellow balloon that bounces around. It will blow you up if it touches you.

The procedure is the same for screen two. But now you have the balloon and a bird to dodge.

Screen three has the balloon, the bird and a kite. Now it starts to get difficult.

Each screen has an extra object to dodge. Screen six is virtually impossible. It has two balloons, two birds, the kite, and an Evil Edna-type TV set.

Pressing the fire button slows things down considerably, allowing you to change direction to avoid all these manic objects. But the three lives given are soon lost.

On the whole, I found *Grab It* boring. I got fed up being killed by balloons and kites.

Emma Brown

Value 2
Sound 3
Graphics 3
Gameplay 2

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

INSECTAMANIA/PLANET ZEUS
Machine: Vic-20 (+ 8K, optional joystick)
Supplier: Enigma
Price: £5.50
Type of game: sci-fi shoot 'em up
The idea of two games on one tape is becoming more popular.

The first game on this tape is *Insectamania*.

The idea is to journey to the right to collect a powerful laser and, on the journey, you try to shoot as many insects as possible to gain high scores.

As the insects descend, you must shoot them. Otherwise they will gradually eat your civilisation, represented by men at the bottom of the screen. Before eating your civilisation, the insects leave traps on the ground which you cannot pass.

The game ends in three ways: your civilisation is destroyed, you run out of lives or you return to base without the laser.

Insectamania is an excellent game which includes three skill levels (slow-fast) and a generous five lives.

The graphics are quite good, but nothing special. The sound is good and varied and the range of colours is cleverly used.

The second game is called *Planet Zeus*. Again, as seems common with Enigma, the instructions are colourful and clear. But, although the first game is original, this is a jazzed-up version of *Space Invaders*.

It has to be said that, in jazzing it up, a great effort has been made. There are more bases to hide behind, which disintegrate very quickly. Included is the familiar space ship moving across the top. When this is hit, instead of being destroyed, the back flares and the craft speeds up.

Another added feature is the ability of the aliens to hide in the dark zone. This improves the game so it is not as tedious as *Space Invaders*.

The sound and graphics are good, but I preferred *insectamania*. A good feature in both games is an excellent idea – a button to reset the high score which can be very useful at times. Both games represent a worthwhile buy.

Miles Opie

Value 3.5
Graphics 3
Sound 3
Gameplay 4 *(Insectamania)*
3 *(Planet Zeus)*

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

SUBMARINE COMMANDER
Machine: 16K Vic-20, Atari
Supplier: Thorn EMI
Price: £5.95
Type of game: skill
There aren't many submarine simulations around for the Vic-20. This one, as well as being rare, is very good. The instructions for the game are very clear and easy to understand. They are printed in the form of a booklet.

In play you are given a choice of nine skill levels. The number of enemy convoys increase as a higher skill level is chosen.

Movements can be controlled by the keyboard or by a combination of joystick and keyboard. Many keys are used to control the sub. So, if you do not have a joystick for movement, you may find the arrangements fiddly.

The game has three modes: periscope, map and sonar.

Periscope mode enables you to view the sea in front of you. This can be seen only at a depth of thirty metres or under.

Map mode enables you to see the Mediterranean around your sub. Your vessel is shown as a blinking dot and the enemy as normal dots. The map is superbly drawn, with every detail included.

Sonar mode is the sound system which shows your sub as a dot in the centre of the circular screen, and the enmy as white 'blips'. When the blips are above the cross hair, they are in range.

Also included in the features is a range indicator. This shows the distance from the bottom of your sub to the sea bed. When you approach a coastline, the sea bed looms into view, and some clever steering is needed to avoid the rocks.

Speed is controlled by the numerical keys 1 to 9, and quite high speeds can be reached. Be warned, though. High speeds can sometimes wreck your sub, because slowing down and turning round take a long time.

It's because of this turning problem that the enemy can have a field day attacking your craft. One strategy is to dive to a depth of fifty or sixty metres when depth charges are being dropped. Once this is done, the ballast tanks can be blown. These cause the sub to rise to the surface, and the attack should be over.

The enemy is composed of three different types of vessel: tankers, patrol boats and destroyers. All are worth various amounts of tonnage when sunk. When the game ends, you are given a rating which starts at bilge pumper. The highest rating I got was petty officer.

I would rate the game as a classic. It is simply brilliant. Every feature of the expanded Vic has been used.

Jason Habgood

Value 4.5
Graphics 4.5
Sound 4
Gameplay 4.5

The axeing of the Vic 20 means fewer reviews as less games are produced for it. So this issue looks at the newest and most popular.

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SPECTRUM £5.95

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A graphic adventure. Pick your force to locate, photograph, penetrate and eventually destroy Hitler's secret germ warfare establishment.

JOHNNY REB
DRAGON/TANDY 32K, COMMODORE 64K, MEMOTECH MTX 500/512 £6.95
ALSO FOR SPECTRUM £5.50, ELECTRON/ BBC B, ORIC/ATMOS £6.95

"I could quite easily get addicted… very user friendly… good value for money" ELECTRON USER

There's still plenty of fight left in the Confederate South as each side selects forces to do battle on a full graphics battlefield. One or two players.

CONFRONTATION: SCENARIOS VOL I
SPECTRUM £5.95

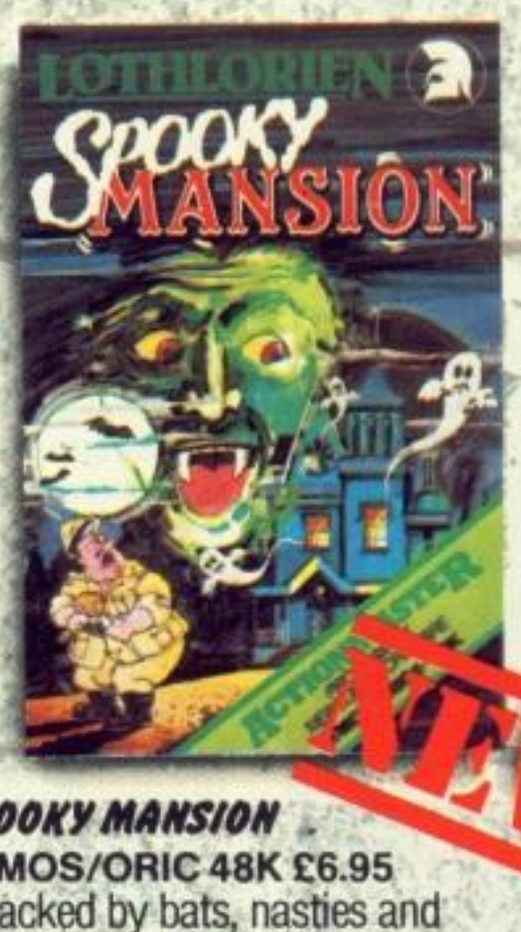
For use with the Master CONFRONTATION program, this add-on pack gives you four scenarios set in actual 20th Century Conflicts: Afghanistan, Angola, Sinai and Kent following the German Invasion in 1940.

CHARLIE'S BRICK!

CHOC A BLOC CHARLIE
COMMODORE 64 £6.95

Caught in a time-warp, Charlie is trapped in a sealed warehouse. Avoiding the robots and ferocious guards he builds a time door to escape to the next warehouse. 2 screens, 16 increasingly difficult levels. Sound and smooth machine-code graphics.

DIG THIS FOR ATMOS



SPOOKY MANSION
ATMOS/ORIC 48K £6.95

Attacked by bats, nasties and everything that moves, intrepid explorer Hugo First fights his way through the spooky mansion collecting weapons, wakens Dracula and condemns him to a fiery hell. Great effects and sound, good machine-code graphics. 10 levels. 3 Lives. 7 screens.

DIGGER
ATMOS/ORIC 48K £6.95

Monsters in the mineworkings try to stop you taking your gold to the Bank. Clear the screen and they re-emerge with new recruits (up to 60!) and the game speeds up. 4 lives. Great sound and graphics.

A GAME TO GET YOUR TEETH INTO!

REALM OF THE UNDEAD
SPECTRUM £5.95

Can you fight off the vampires to reach the subterranean dungeons of Dracula's Castle, where you release the villagers and Dracula, who must be lured to his coffin for the final chill? 3 screens.

HYPERBLASTER
SPECTRUM £5.95

You are commanding a prototype spacecraft on a test flight when you are attacked by an Alien force. Dare you test your Hyperblast and plunge into Hyperspace? Fast action. 100% machine-code. 15 screens. Keyboard manoeuverability.

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ZX81 16K

* Micromouse	£5.95 ☐

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November GAME REVIEWS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

FACTORY BREAKOUT
Machine: Spectrum 48K (+ joystick)
Supplier: Poppy Soft
Price £5.50
Type of game: skill

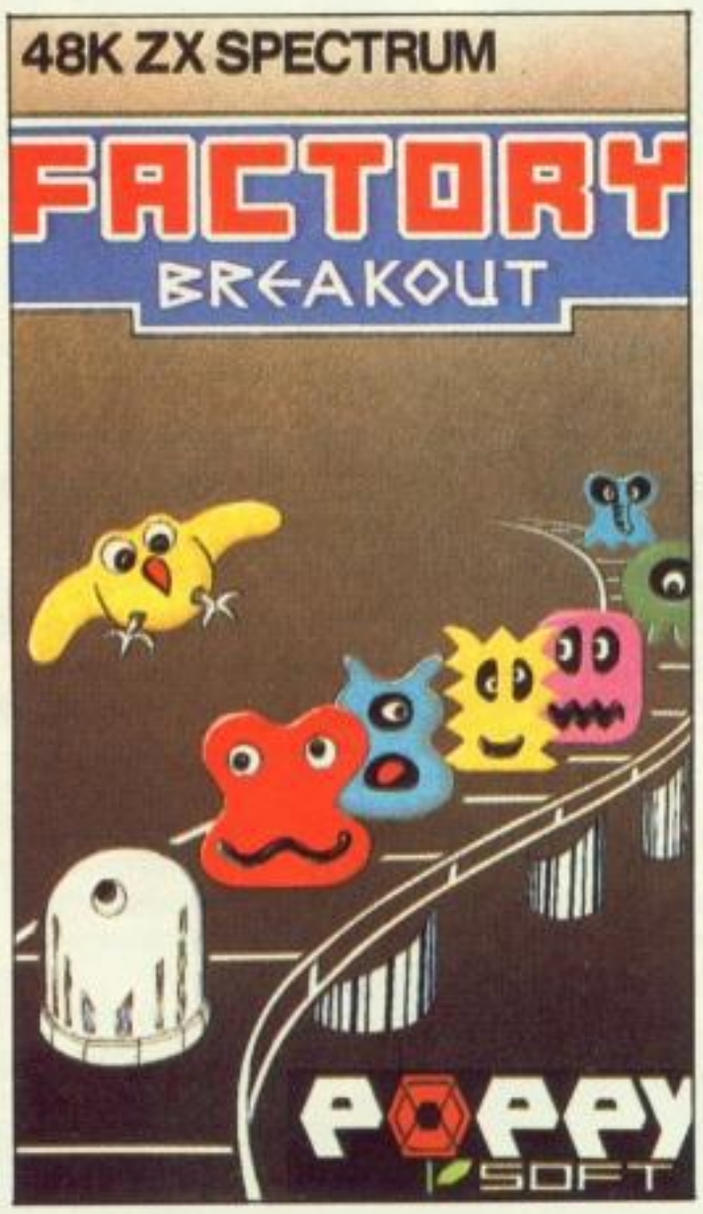
"The robot factory on the planet Xial has been taken over by alien monsters. They have activated the factory's self-destruct mechanism. The only robot left alive is Zirky. Can you help him to evade the monsters and break out of the factory?" reads the scenario. The answer to that question, for me at least, is no.

Factory Breakout is by a relatively unknown software company. But with games like this, it won't be unknown for long.

Zirky is the very latest design Zirronium Mr II Robot. The idea of the game is to hatch him out of his egg capsule, and take him down the five floors of the building. Each floor has two screens.

First is the rejection line, where lasers come down from special laser turrets on the roof. On later floors the lasers move faster and the conveyor belt randomly moves either way. But he can't hang about, because a killer canary is slowly floating up.

The second screen is the lift room



with a lift on either side. Zirky must be sucked up the lift – and can exit at any opening on the way up. To complete the screen, Zirky must travel through the many doors, changing their colours, until they disappear. On this screen the aliens appear. They destroy Zirky if they touch him, which is quite likely as they home in on him.

Luckily for Zirky there are four flashing force fields on the screen – which act as the power pills do in *Pac-Man*. They give him a brief chance to destroy the monsters. If you complete the screen, you get an extra life.

You can start at any level. At the start of each game, you must defend Zirky while he is hatching from seven laser turrets. You circle with a short-range laser. Starting on higher levels makes the lasers travel faster. To finish the game, you must finish the last level – Epsilon – and get into the next screen, which is a mystery.

The graphics are well-defined and fantastically smooth moving, possibly the smoothest moving I have seen on the Spectrum. They are perhaps equalled only by Fantasy's *The Pyramid* and *Doomsday Castle*.

The sound in the game is not continuous, but what sound there is is great. The game makes superb use of colour and it is applied effectively. The game is simple, and this will add to its lasting appeal. The main part of the game is the lift room. The hatching and rejection line screens prevent the game from becoming monotonous.

I enjoyed playing the game very much. It is very addictive, and I think it is well worth buying just for the smooth graphics. What can I say? Just sheer brilliance!

Anthony Ackroyd

Value 4.5
Graphics 4.5
Sound 4.5
Gameplay 4.5

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

BOMBER MISSION
Machine Vic-20 (16K expanded)
Supplier: Commodore
Price £5.95
Type of game: skill

This game is a combination of a flight simulator and a strategy game. The idea of the program is simple in concept: you must select a strategic target and also choose which weapons can destroy it. In play, you are given an explanation of the scenario and the performance data of the aircraft.

You must take off in a certain time, or your plane will be blitzed.

When you are in the air, enemy planes fire at you and bullet holes spray across the screen. If you are lucky, you will escape with a fire. If not – it's free-fall time.

The only problem with the display is that you do not see anything outside your window apart from the planes. They can be shot down but this takes five hits. When you shoot an aircraft down, you receive an ace.

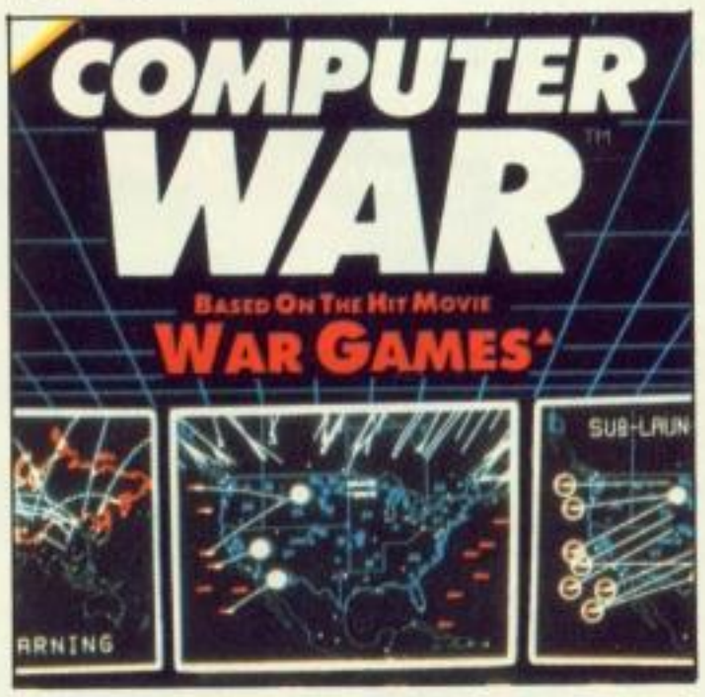
As you approach the target, you are attacked considerably and fuel is rapidly used up. When you attack the target you are told what happened. Then you turn for home – providing there is ample time and fuel. There is a time limit of one to ten minutes.

I would rate the game as being above average, and it provides plenty of excitement. Your grandad may want a go, as it relives all the excitement of a World War II dogfight.

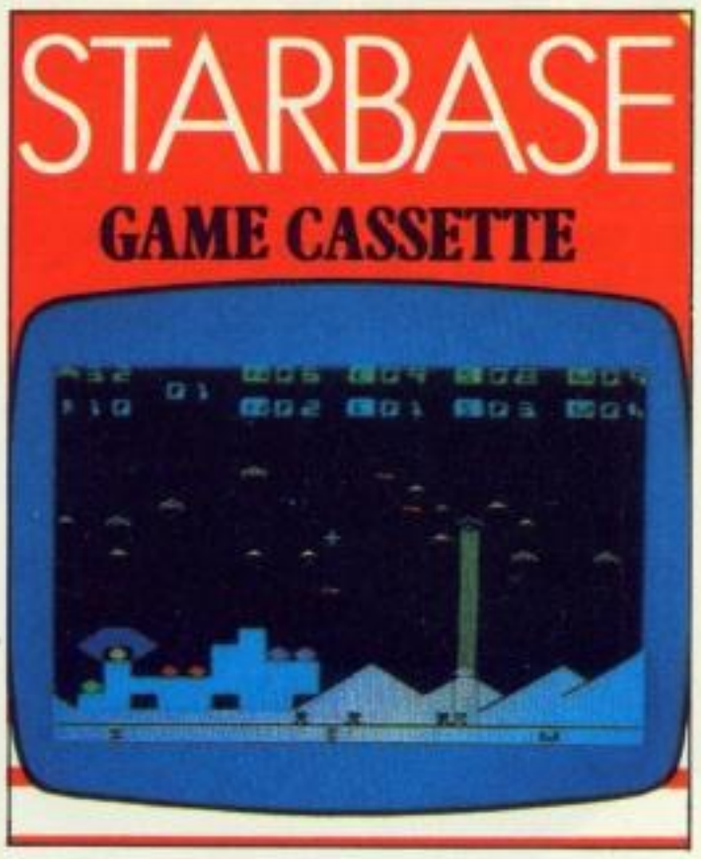
Jason Habgood

Value 4
Graphics 3.5
Sound 3.5
Gameplay 4

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆



Creative Sparks has converted its most popular games to the Atari.



STAR BASE
Machine: Vic 20
Supplier: Commodore
Price: £4.99
Type of game: shoot 'em up
Another shoot-the-invader game, but with an extra idea thrown in. In this game, you've got to save the planet XA2 from a large number of scientist-stealing aliens.

When the game starts, you're positioned in the middle of the screen. You see the scenario through the crosshairs of a gun. To destroy the aliens, move the cross over the aliens, and they explode. That sounds easy, but be warned. It's the hardest thing in the game to do.

When the aliens first arrive, they're tiny little dots, which grow to be scientist-stealing aliens. If you don't want to lose quickly, race around the planet destroying the tiny dots, which is impossible.

When the game starts, you have sixteen scientists. These appear at the bottom of the screen, running from one side to the other. If the aliens take up all your scientists, the game is over. But if you destroy all the aliens, and still have scientists left, you get bonus points.

At the top of the screen, you've got the radar. This shows you how many aliens there are around the planet – the planet is split up into four: N, S, E, W. The radar shows how many scientists you have left in each **sector**, as well.

This game also has music. When I first heard this music, it sounded familiar. The tune kept coming back to me, then I found out it was from *Indiana Jones*.

Apart from the great music, the graphics are good. The game itself is a cross between *Missile Command* and *Defender*. An excellent, but very hard game.

David Cook

Graphics 4
Sound 3
Value 3
Gameplay 4

ROAD ROLLER
Machine: Commodore 64
Supplier: Knight Software
Price: N/A
Type of game: maze/skill
In this game you control a small paint roller whose job it is to paint the roads purple – of all colours! Sounds easy? Well, it's not.

As well as guiding the roller around blocks (they're supposed to be buildings), you're constantly chased by ghouls. These closely resemble the *Pac-Man* ghosts.

These can be overcome by painting the end of a railway bridge in the centre of the screen. This turns the ghouls blue. They can be squashed by quickly moving over them with your roller.

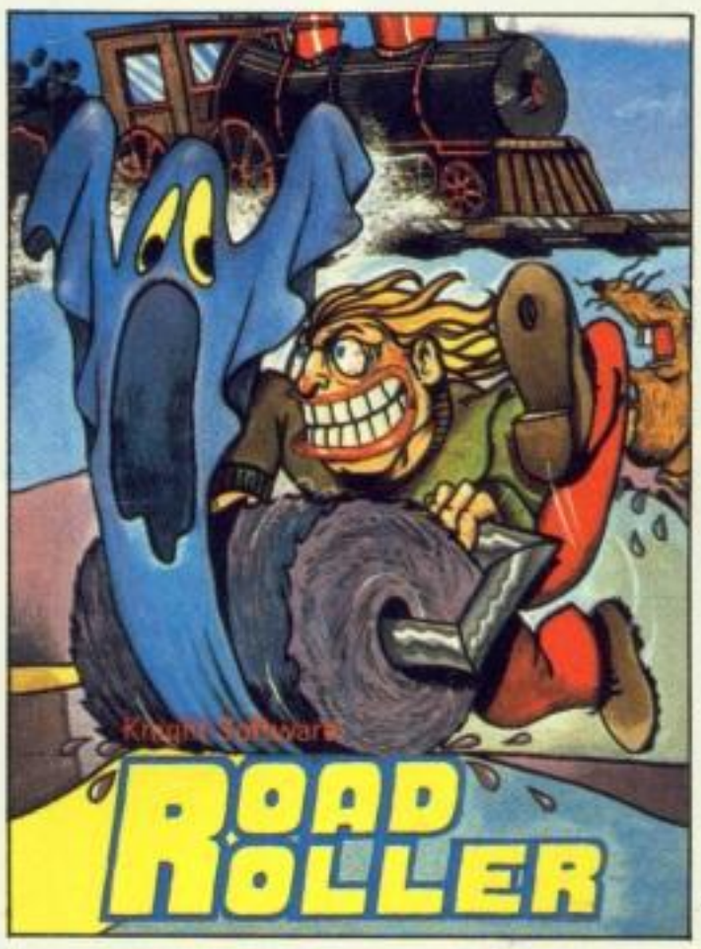
Later levels bring more ghouls, and a rat who leaves muddy little footprints all over your painted road. This means you have to re-paint it.

A small black car also joins in, to mess up the road. But both the car and the rat can be simply squashed by the roller, and will not be able to 'kill' you.

The graphics on this game are terrible, and the sound is pretty drab. These two elements help make a boring game very boring.

Gary Anderson

Value 2
Graphics 2
Sound 2
Gameplay 2

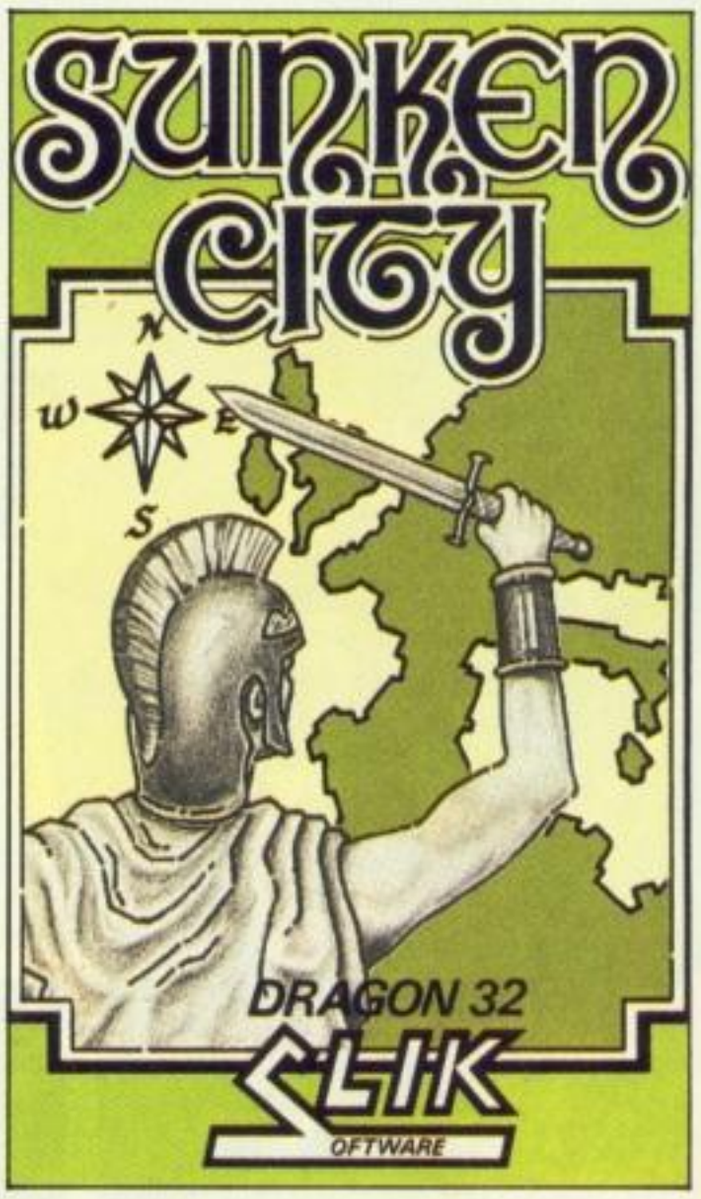


★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

SUNKEN CITY
Machine: Dragon 32
Supplier: Slik Software
Price: £7.95
Type of Game: graphic adventure
If you liked Wintersoft's *Ring of Darkness*, then the chances are that you might enjoy this. Instead of finding a ring this time, you have to discover the whereabouts of the lost sunken city. Here the fabled wheel of time lies. You, as assistant to Professor Ellis, must find this so that he can finish his time machine.

The game starts off with a very nice hi-res picture of the world around which you must travel, entering different towns and cities located by a dot on the map. It is here that you may buy food, mortality points, weapons, and transport.

And it is here that you are set on a quest by the king. It is these pursuits which will eventually lead you to the resting place of the sunken city and



the wheel of time.

Comparisons with the *Ring of Darkness* are inevitable because they are so similar. But whereas the former was enthralling, interesting, and took me over two months to solve, the latter is boring. I needed only two hours to complete it. It might hold some people's attention for some time. But if you're a seasoned adventurer, or even a plain mediocre one, then avoid this like the plague.

Andy Jones

Value 2
Graphics 3
Sound 1
Gameplay 2

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COMPUTER WAR
Machine: Vic-20 (8/16K), Atari
Supplier: Thorn EMI
Price: £5.95
Type of game: strategy/skill/shoot 'em up

This is one of the first games from Creative Sparks – a subsidiary of Thorn EMI, which is better known for its video tapes than computer games.

The game is rather good. It's based on the film *War Games* and follows the plot somewhat.

You are the greatest computer hacker on the other side of the Atlantic and have broken into the US NORAD defence computer, (see TVG May 1984). Nuclear missiles are triggered and heading for the main target in the US.

Your job is to move your cursor around the screen map of America, landing on one small dot out of many. Then fire. All the time the 'DEFCON' rating is going down. DEFCON 5 is peace and DEFCON 1 is war. When you reach DEFCON 1 (D1) the game ends.

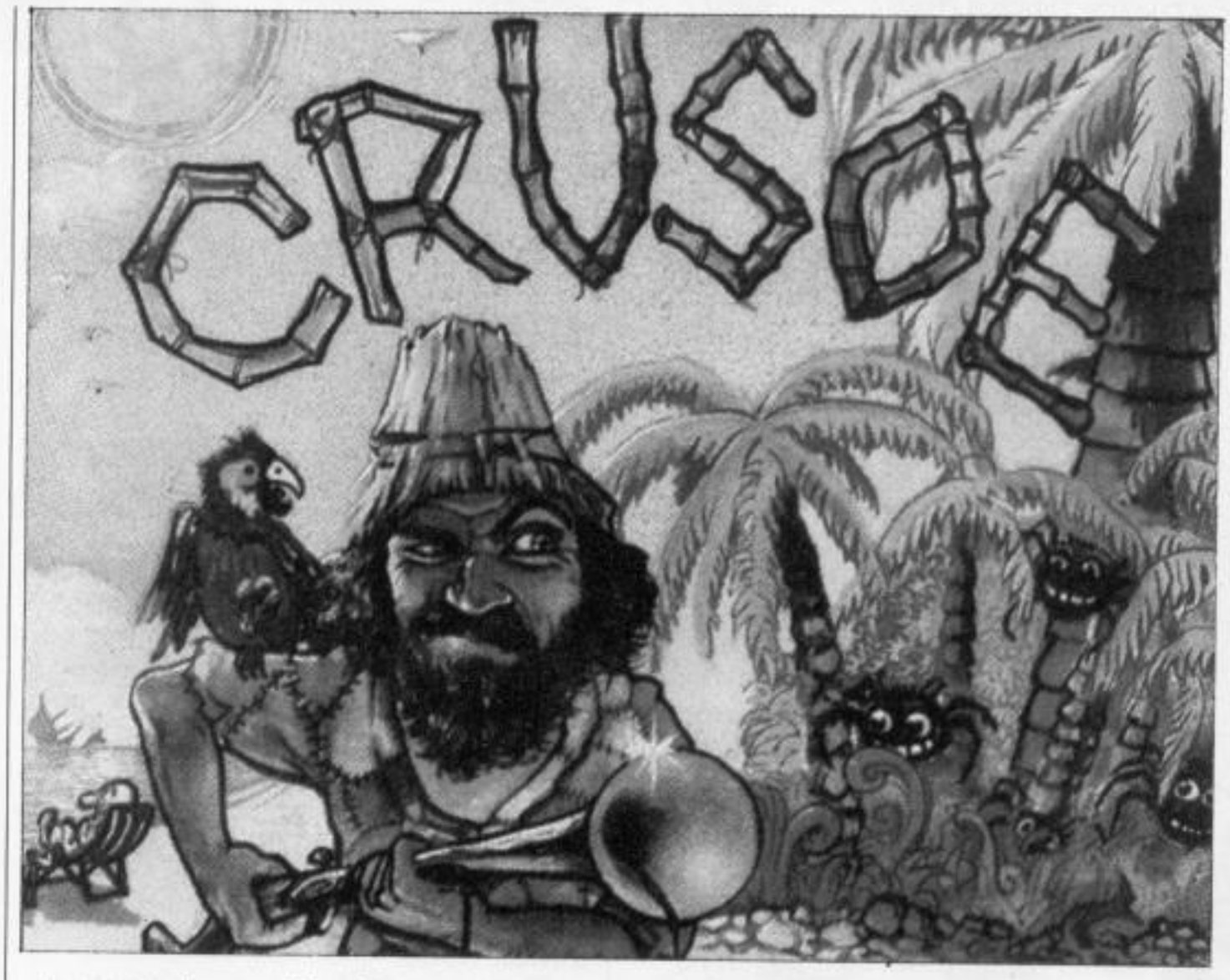
Now you are on screen two which is a bit like *Battlezone*. Here you are a fully armed gunboat and your job is to shoot the missile down. The little arrows on top of the screen act like radar. Follow them except when pointing up. Then pull back on the joystick or go down. Trap it in the 'V' sights and shoot. When shot, the screen erupts and the missile twists away with a smoke trail flaming behind it.

Your shooting must be accurate, because in level one you have only twenty seconds, in level two fifteen seconds, etc. The scrolling is good. Screen three is all about cracking a code and gets you bonus points. This game is good, sound is average.

The US map is drawn very accurately, considering the Vic's limitations, and it is this which makes *Computer War* above average. The high score is kept.

Value 3.5
Graphics 3.5
Sound 1.5
Gameplay 3.5

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆



CRUSOE
Machine: Spectrum 48K
Supplier: Automata
Price: £6.00
Type of game: adventure

This is the latest adventure from the company which brought us *Pimania* and *Groucho*. This time, you play the part of Crusoe. You have – of course – been marooned on a desert island, and your objective is to eventually escape.

The screen shows a partial map of the island, which changes when you move off screen. There is also a status display and five lines at the bottom of the screen for input and witty responses.

You control Crusoe using the N, E, S, W directional commands. The game also accepts Drop, Throw, Examine and other adventure commands – but not Get, only Take. Useful (?) objects include turtle eggs, a hammer, a parasol and a skull.

I thought this game was very good at first. But it was too difficult and slow – and my copy was partially bug-ridden.

If you're a Pimaniac, you'll probably like *Crusoe*. If not, test it before you buy.

Richard Henderson

Value 3
Graphics 2
Sound N/A
Gameplay 3

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

STARSHIP DISCOVERY
Machine: BBC
Supplier: Alligata
Price: £7.95
Type of game: space strategy

You may think you would like to travel in space – but do you have the necessary skill to make a useful crew member? So asks the blurb that introduces Alligata's new game.

The scene is set. The Starship Discovery is to embark on a three-year voyage to Saturn, and needs astronauts to pilot its EVA – Extra Vehicular Activity – pods. These are to carry out repair work on the outside of Discovery during its space flight.

The simulator tests your ability to pilot an EVA pod. You must pass through the eight levels of difficulty before being allowed on the mission – I haven't managed to get that far yet!

After you've been through the list of comprehensive on-screen instructions, you are presented with a range of possible situations from which to start the game. These can range from being lost in space to docking. You must use all the controls to ensure success.

You navigate your craft with the help of full instrumentation control or a "head up display". This gives a window view of graphical information pertaining to your flight status.

There are also proficiency points. After each game, you are given a score. A low score places you with the catering corps. A high score promotes you to membership of the Saturn mission.

Starship Discovery is a very good game, but I have a few minor gripes. The graphics are vector: fairly detailed but not brilliant. The screen tends to flicker. When you type in a new command, the entire screen has to be redrawn. And your command inputs must be completed before the next radar bleep – a few seconds in all. If you don't, you must type them in again.

The sound is awful. It seems to have been copied straight out of the Beeb's manual: there are only beeps and squeaks. I think the sound capabilities of this machine could have been used more extensively.

Having said that, these quibbles are made up by good gameplay. *Starship Discovery* is worthy of a place in any software library.

Waseem Asghar

Value 4
Graphics 3
Sound 1.5
Gameplay 3.5

November GAME REVIEWS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

ADRIFT IN SPACE
Machine: Spectrum 48K
Supplier: Mogul
Price: N/A
Type of game: adventure

Over the years, many variations on the basic adventure theme have appeared for the Spectrum. The best include *The Hobbit*, *Valhalla*, *Piman* and *The Lords of Midnight*. Mogul has gone for the basic text-only variant, but with the added ingredients of brainteasing logic problems and tons of frustration. "Ah! Just like all the others, but without the pretty pictures," I hear you say. Wrong; it makes *Valhalla* look like it was written for five-year olds.

The plot of *Adrift In Space* hurls you on a space cruiser. Your task is to find the exit and escape. But you are amid a large population of psycho bloodlusting aliens hellbent on your death. These aliens are a comparatively small problem – compared with your others. These consist of unmentionable puzzles and problems which must outstrip an IQ test.

After spending five or six hours in one room, you may be tempted to rush down to the garden shed and take the power drill to your Spectrum. Lock it up before you play.

Even the Help command isn't very helpful. It comes up with sardonic phrases such as "you fool" and "use logic". Your encounters are also confusing: corridors which lead nowhere, one-way doors, deadly traps, sweet papers, bandages and flower pots.

I also found the game rather slow, with a lack of commands and presentation.

I would recommend this game only to an adventure freak. I nearly killed myself playing *The Hobbit* – and that had pretty pictures to relieve the strain.

Matthew Jarvis

Value 3
Graphics N/A
Sound 2
Gameplay 3.5

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

PIROMANIA
Machine: Spectrum 48K
Supplier: Automata
Price: £6.00
Type of game: skill

The game is set on a series of platforms, connected by ladders. These represent the floors of Automata Towers. The idea of the game is for the player – alias Walter Hose – to extinguish the steadily growing flames inside Automata Towers.

This can be achieved with a bucket, or with fire extinguishers from amidst the flames. The bucket must be refilled after a few throws, from taps around the screen. It can put out flames only at short distances. The extinguisher lasts longer, and works at greater distances than the bucket. Walter has also an extending ladder for use when others have burnt down. But, once used, the ladder stays put.

Doors on the platforms can be opened and closed. When closed, they prevent fire passing through for a short while.

There are eight screens. These repeat on completion, but with a lot more flames. From the sixth screen onwards, dynamite occasionally appears. Don't let the flames get near!

Extra points can be gained by rescuing the panicky residents who run about wildly; by collecting valuables such as Spectrums, vases, pictures and mystery objects; and by speedy fire fighting. The main points awarded are for how much of the tower remains after the fire.

On the fourth screen and onwards, the Pi-man appears. He lights fires on the platforms with what appears to be a torch – or maybe a cigar, in which case Groucho would have been better.

When the player loses a life, an angel rises to the top of the screen. If the Pi-man is extinguished, a devil descends. The point where he departed is saturated with flames.

On occasion, a pink elephant dances across the top floor, dousing all the flames in its path. If a section of floor burns continuously, the flame dies down. The section soon disappears, as if collapsed.

The flames are red; to give the effect of flickering some are randomly coloured yellow, white and magenta. While not being superb, the effect is quite good. The flames look very realistic. When extinguished, the flames give off a spiral of smoke – a nice touch.

The speed of the game is not constant, and slows with the appearance of the Pi-man or elephant. The graphics range from the smooth-moving people, elephant, Pi-man and flames, to the flickering graphics of the player, to the plain spray of extinguisher and splash of water.

Colour is used well throughout the game, but colour clashing is very common. Sound is also well used, but of low quality. There is a large choice of control keys, and they are very responsive.

The game has a hall of fame – or flame – with space for ten names. Whilst playing I found quite a few bugs, but none affected play much. The game is very addictive and I enjoyed playing, especially when the Pi-man was blown up by the dynamite.

On the B-side of the cassette is a song called "Put the Cat Out, Mother" by a company called Safety and Matches. It was OK. But the words consisted mainly of 'put the cat out, mother, it's on fire again' with background noises of fires, sirens and the screech of the cat.

Anthony Ackroyd

Value 3.5
Graphics 3.5
Sound 2
Gameplay 4

D·A·V·E R·A·V·E·S·!

Making music or sound effects on the Atari can be difficult for the beginner – and tedious for both beginners and the experienced. But help is at hand. Dave Harvey has a few tricks to make your Atari go with a real bang! Just read on.

It is possible, by programming, to play music on your Atari computer. But the beginner may find this painstakingly difficult. It is also painstakingly boring.

So in this issue we take a look at music for the Atari. In the next issue, we list some short programs for you to type in and try out. Have fun!

To start off, your Atari computer has just over three and a half octaves. Each octave equals twelve half steps or eight notes. Your Atari also has four independent sound channels: 0, 1, 2, 3. This enables you to combine notes to make chords or complex sound effects. For instance, we could have channel 1 sounding middle C, 2 sounding E above middle C and 3 sounding out G thus producing – C major.

If you want to sound like Depeche Mode or The Human League you're out of luck. Both of these bands, and many others, use a computer synthesiser called a Synclavier. Other machines include Emulators and Fairlights, which also use synthesisers. But be prepared to pay well over the thousand pound mark.

Unfortunately, your Atari home computer has only one pure tone which you can use for music: a bland squarewave. Normally, a squarewave exists in only two states: hi and low. When it's inside an Atari computer it exists in only one state: boring. There are other tones, but using them for music can prove to be a bit beyond the beginner.

As well as these tones, you can use distortions or a white noise generator. White noise is a combination of all the frequencies of the audio spectrum. Select VHF/FM on your radio and go to an off station position – you are now experiencing white noise. As white noise has no pitch, it is used for producing sound effects such as waves or thunder.

So, while your computer doesn't have a wide range of pure tones to play music, it does have a handy set of distortions to make sound effects.

Atari has come up with some music composer-type cartridges which instantly make music while the notes are displayed on a stave on the screen. These items will set you back about £30. If you are thinking of buying one, think again. They memorise the tunes you play on screen so you can recall them at a later date, but doing this is, again, a bit long.

For a little over £30 you could buy a mini monophonic (one note at a time) keyboard. This has a wide range of instrument imitations such as piano and organ. If you're lucky, a rhythm box will be fitted. Most of these can memorise tunes, but it will probably have only one or two channels. The Music Composer has four.

You could introduce yourself to the world of music the easy way, and, if you or a friend have a conventional tape recorder, record your masterpieces. Memory facilities are normally limited, but with a tape recorder you can record as much as you like.

Remember the band Trio? It had a number two hit using a Casio VL-1 keyboard, which you can buy for about £30.

If you are going to program your Atari to play music (via sound statements), you will also need to time the notes and the pauses between them – perfectly. You do this with blank FOR – NEXT loops. These you would put between your sound statements. Could you imagine Frankie Goes to Hollywood's *Relax* with no pauses between the notes of the arrangements?

To start you off, here's a v. short program.

```
5 GR.18
10 OPEN #1,4,0,"K:"
20 GET #1,D
22 TRAP 25
25 ?#6;D;"";
28 SO.0,D,10,8:POKE 712,D:FOR
   H=1 TO 50:NEXT H:SO.0.0.0.0
30 GOTO 20
```

By the time you are reading this article, on the shelves of most high street shops will be a keyboard with a difference. That difference is it will be compatible with most home computers. Casio is making the said product, but you are likely to see machines by other companies as well.

All you need to do is hook up your home computer to the Casio keyboard. Then program the keyboard, via the computer, to play the music. You can also save your musical masterpieces to tape (like computer programs), and load it back into the computer's memory for playback at a later date.

The Casio keyboard will incorporate stereo speakers, eight instrumental sounds, and a rhythm box. It also includes stereo chorus and automatic bass. Price: £150. □

JOIN THIS MONTH'S TOP 20 PANEL

Tell us about yourself

Your age: If under 18, please be exact .....

18-24 ( ) 25-34 ( ) 35 and over ( )

Do you read any other games or computer magazines? If so, which ones:

.....

.....

Do you expect to buy a home computer in the next year? (please tick one)

yes ☐ perhaps ☐ no ☐

What computer(s)/games system(s) do you have?

.....

And when did you get them? .....

What's your favourite home screen game?

TITLE .....

WHAT DO YOU PLAY IT ON? ..... WHAT'S YOUR HIGHEST SCORE? .....

What's your favourite arcade or pub game?

TITLE .....

WHAT'S YOUR HIGHEST SCORE? .....

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ATARI VCS JR.

The Atari 2600 has been redesigned for Christmas markets. So Darrin Williamson took another look at this underrated games system and some now-classic Atari games.

First, let's look at the VCS in its rejuvenated form. The original VCS was conceived and designed in the mid 1970s (is it really a decade ago?). At the time, it was considered to be a technological marvel, which it was.

Over the years, however, microchips and microelectronics have become smaller and cheaper. So it was a logical move to redesign the VCS to take advantage of more modern technology.

This is where the VCS 2600 Jr fits in. It's a smaller, neater, more economic version of its older brother. All the functions of the old VCS are emulated on the Jr. But it's maybe a bit disappointing that nothing more was added to the system to enhance future games. It is but a midget clone of a seven-year old system. Nevertheless, it offers all the enjoyment of many cartridge titles, including all the coin-op classics from Arcade-dom during the last five years. We review a few here.

Ms Pac-Man

Even though *Pac-man* was the number one bestseller in home video games in 1982, many fans of the arcade coin-op criticised the graphics, the colours and the game play, saying that they weren't close enough to the real thing for their liking. Once news leaked out that the sequel to *Pac-Man* was in production the fans eagerly waited in the hope that Atari would come up with something that even the most discerning Pac-Maniac can find no fault with.

Ms Pac-Man lives up to this. The graphics have been greatly improved (due to the loss of variations). Our little yellow friend now actually points in the direction it's taking and the unflattering vitamins have now been replaced by fruit which are actually quite realistic. You even get several different patterns of maze to a game. In short, if you liked *Pac-Man* you'll love *Ms Pac-Man*.

Asteroids

One of Atari's all time best sellers and one of the first to use an 8K ROM instead of the conventional 2K or 4K.

The game play is very similar to the enormously successful coin-op original. However, the graphics and sound, although quite good, are not up to coin-op standards.

This is because the arcade game uses a different type of screen and a different graphics process called Vectorscan (although Atari uses the name Quadrascan for some reason). It's you vs an asteroid field and a bunch of satellites and UFOs (nicknamed Wally and Beaver by the Atari programmers).

Battlezone

Thankfully Atari hasn't tried to copy the coin op (direct vector to raster translations seldom work too well.). Instead of the wire frame images you are given a cartoon like a rasterscan image.

All our old 'friends' are there: the enemy tank, supertank, missile and the saucer (still worth 5000 points). If you're hit by the enemy you get interference on the screen as if the tank's video display unit had been disconnected. All in all this game runs rings round *Combat*.

Defender

This game has been equally successful as a coin-op for Williams Electronics and as a VCS game for Atari. Atari programmer Bob Pularo had the awesome task of squeezing a 26K game controlled by a fire button, one lever control panel into a 4k console and a joystick.

All your friends are there to greet you: landers, mutants, bombers, pods, swarmers and baiters along with your earthship Defender. Game play is quite complex and will take even a hardened space gamer quite a while to master fully. The graphics and sound do come reasonably close to the real thing.

Bearing in mind the limitations of both hardware and software, Bob Polaro has done an incredibly good job with *Defender*.

Jungle Hunt

This is based on Atari's coin-op of the same name. The game is in several phases. First you have to swing on vines to get across a section of scrolling screen. You then have to swim through a crocodile-infested river, killing crocs as you go and surfacing for air. Having survived that you have to get past a number of large and small boulders, some of which you must jump and some you must dodge. Next comes the ultimate objective, when you must outwit the cannibal warrior in order to save the princess. Atari has made good use of the graphics and sound in this game. All in all, a good game with a nail biting storyline.

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Pitfall 2 *(Atari HCS, VCS)* July 1984
Raiders of the Lost Ark *(Atari VCS)*
- **Part 1** April 1984
- **Part 2** May 1984

Scramble *(Vectrex)* May 1984
Star Raiders *(Atari HCS)* June 1984
Super Cobra *(Atari HCS, VCS, Intellivision, Coleco)* July 1984
Yar's Revenge *(Atari VCS)* April 1984
Zaxxon *(C64, Spectrum)* October 1984

NEW GAME PREVIEWS

Lords of Midnight *(Spectrum)* July 1984
Montezuma's Revenge *(Atari VCS, C64, Spectrum)* September 1984
Zenji *(C64)* October 1984

HARDWARE/ACCESSORY TESTS

Atari VCS Winter 1983
Atmos June1984
Atari 600XL March 1984
BBC 'B' August 1984
Colecovision Winter 1983
Commodore 64 October 1984
Controllers Survey Autumn 1983
Intellivision Winter 1983
ORIC-1 June 1984
Sharp MZ 700 May 1984
The Sinclair Computers April 1984
Spectra VS 318 July 1984
Supercharger for VCS Autumn 1984
Texas Instruments TI99/4A May 1984
Vectrex Winter 1983
Vic-20 July 1984

ALL THE GAMES FOR...

Atari VCS Winter 1983
Atmos June 1984
Atari 600XL March 1984
BBC 'B' August 1984
Colecovision Winter 1983
ORIC-1 June 1984
Sharp MZ 700 May 1984
Sinclair Spectrum April 1984
TI99/4A May 1984
Vectrex Winter 1983
Vic-20 July 1984

THE ARCADE SCENE

The Laser Game is here! March 1984
The "X" Factor July 1984
Pier Arcades August 1984

New Arcade Game Reviews

Albegas July 1984
Bomb Jack July 1984
Bubbles April 1984
Circus Charlie July 1984
Crystal Castles April 1984
Dragon's Lair (In Depth) June 1984
Flicky September 1984
Formation Z October 1984
Laser Grand Prix March 1983
MACH 3 March 1983
Pit & Run September 1984
Punch-Out September 1984
Roller Aces October 1984
Sinistar April 1984
Track & Field May 1984
Tin Star May 1984
TX 1 September 1984
Upn' Down May 1984
Us vs Them October 1984

All issues contain the latest news, reviews of new games, Readers' letters, High Scores and Competitions.

Note: Issues 1, 2 & 3 were each complete listings of all the games available for Atari VCS, Intellivision, Coleco and Vectrex video games. Many of the reviews were reprinted with amendments from issue to issue. Issue 3, Winter 1983, remains the most comprehensive listing of games for these machines.

Issue 2 (Winter 1983) is now Out of Stock, but photocopies of articles from it may be provided at £1 each.

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As monitored by *TV Gamer* readers

TOP 20 video and computer games

POSITION		NAME	MANUFACTURER	SYSTEMS
1	(1)	JET SET WILLY	(Software Projects)	c, j
2	(2)	ZAXXON	(CBS/Datasoft)	b, f, g, n
3	(7)	PITFALL II	(Activision)	n
4	(—)	BEACH HEAD	(US Gold)	c
5	(8)	DECATHLON	(Activision)	c, n
6	(12)	LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	(Beyond)	c, j
7	(—)	SABRE WOLF	(Ultimate)	j
8	(3)	PITFALL	(Activision)	b, c, f, g, n
9	(5)	POLE POSITION	(Atari)	a, c, f, j, n
10	(13)	FULL THROTTLE	(Micromega)	j
11	(4)	RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK	(Atari)	n
12	(10)	DONKEY KONG	(CBS/Atari)	b, f, g, n
13	(—)	TRASHMAN	(New Generation)	j
14	(9)	RIVER RAID	(Activision)	b, f, g, j, n
15	(17)	ENDURO	(Activision)	n
16	(—)	VALHALLA	(Legend)	c, j
17	(11)	BURGER TIME	(Mattel)	g
18	(6)	FIGHTER PILOT	(Digital Integration)	j
19	(16)	MANIC MINER	(Bug-Byte/Software Projects)	c, j
20	(18)	POPEYE	(Parker)	b, f, g, n

*Numbers in brackets indicate last month's position

a Acorn BBC Computer b CBS Colecovision/Adam c Commodore 64 d Dragon e Acorn Electron f Atari 400/800 Computers (usually fits XLs) g Intellivision h Oric-1/Atmos i Philips 67000 j Spectrum k Sharp 700 Series (usually fits MZ80 A/K) l TRS 80 Series/Colour Genie m Texas Instruments T199/4A n Atari 2600 VCS o Vectrex p Commodore VIC 20

...and the Top 10 arcade games

1	(1)	STAR WARS	(Atari)	6 (5)	M.A.C.H. 3 (Mylstar)
2	(2)	TRACK & FIELD	(Konami/Kaito)	7 (7)	BUCK ROGERS (Sega)
3	(3)	DRAGON'S LAIR	(Cinematronics)	8 (9)	MR DO (Universal)
4	(4)	POLE POSITION	(Atari/Namco)	9 (—)	TURBO (Sega)
5	(8)	DONKEY KONG	(Atari)	10 (—)	SCRAMBLE (Konami)

TOP GAMES OF THE MONTH

You are invited to vote for your favourite Screen game and your favourite Arcade game. But remember to vote only for those games that you own, have rented or have played a great deal.

To register your vote, use the reply paid card in each issue. One lucky voter will receive a free year's subscription to TV Gamer (decided by draw).

Last month's winner: James Eagleton, Sidcup, Kent

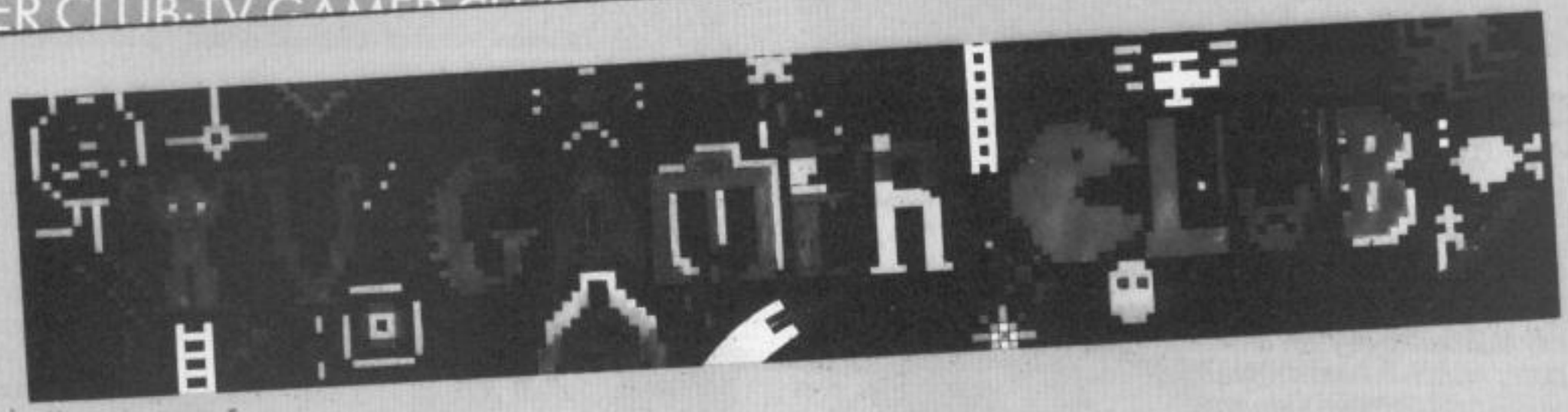
TOP SCORE

1	(1)	**JET SET WILLY** (Software Projects)	**83 objects** Ross Coleman/Cameron Else
2	(2)	**ZAXXON** (TVG claimed)	**3,350,100** Christopher Brady
3	(7)	**PITFALL II** (TVG claimed)	**199,000** Gavin Disney/Andrew Davis
4	(–)	**BEACH HEAD** (US Gold)	no claim made
5	(8)	**DECATHLON** (TVG claimed)	**11,009** Simon Mills
6	(12)	**LORDS OF MIDNIGHT** (TVG claimed)	**solved** Mike Johnson
7	(–)	**SABRE WULF** (Ultimate)	no claim made
8	(3)	**PITFALL** (Activision)	**114,000** David Ross/Richard Varnie
9	(5)	**POLE POSITION** (TVG claimed)	**106,800** Adrian Bunting
10	(13)	**FULL THROTTLE** (Micromega)	no claim made
11	(4)	**RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK** (TVG claimed)	**25 points** Brian Bell
12	(10)	**DONKEY KONG** (TVG claimed)	**8,796,600** Ian Morrish
13	(–)	**TRASHMAN** (New Generation)	no claim made
14	(9)	**RIVER RAID** (Activision)	**1,000,000** Gavin Davidson
15	(17)	**ENDURO** (TVG proven)	**47 days** Paul Boselli
16	(–)	**VALHALLA** (Legend)	no claim made
17	(11)	**BURGER TIME** (TVG proven)	**235,600** A. Collins
18	(6)	**FIGHTER PILOT** (Digital Integration)	no claim made
19	(16)	**MANIC MINER** (TVG claimed)	**3,140,777** Mark Bishop
20	(18)	**POPEYE** (TVG claimed)	**427,550** Frederick Kirk

TV Gamer invites readers to send in their high scores for any screen game. A ***claimed*** score merely needs to state your name, game title, system (eg Atari home computer system, Spectrum, VCS, etc) and claimed score.

A ***proven*** score will require photographic evidence, but will take precedence over previous claimed scores. We suggest using a SLR auto-exposure camera on a tripod with cable release, timed at 1/4 second. Games which can be "clocked" (ie the score reaches a maximum and then returns to zero) will count only as claimed scores. Additionally, games which present short-cuts to high scoring (eg ***Space Invaders***, which can be made to shoot two missiles at a time) will also only be accepted as claimed scores.

Send your scores to *TV Gamer, Top Score Desk, 187 Oxford Street, London W1.*



Well, Halloween is well and truly over, but Christmas is on the way. To celebrate, TVG is coming up with lots of exciting and exclusive features. For instance, the giant poster of Storm Warrior featured on the centre pages. Let us know if you like the idea of posters in the mag. Are there any posters you'd particularly like to see us print? Maybe some of our previous covers have caught your eye, or maybe some advertisements promoting games in shops have struck you as being poster-worthy. Let us know if there are.

Don't forget to enter the designer competition, as I know a great many of you have some very good game ideas. Now you have your chance to get your game marketed by Activision UK. It has been said that there's a best-selling novel in everyone, so maybe the same is true with games. I've also rounded up lots of goodies for the Spectrum. Just enter the competition on page 20. Don't be put off if you don't own a Spectrum – the printer will work on most popular micros.

Did you find the results of the survey interesting? Thanks to all those of you who answered our questions as we roamed the streets of sunny W1.

Well, that's about all I have space for this ish. But fear not! We'll be back in time for the Christmas rush.

Darrin Williamson

WHY, WHY, WHY?

Could you please tell me if anyone is going to make a computer or video game of Nintendo's *Punch Out*? I played it on my holiday and I'm now hooked!

I am thinking of buying an Atari VCS. Do you think I should wait till the 7800 comes to Britain or buy the normal one? Can VCS cartridges run on the computer systems?

I find your eggs section interesting. But why don't you call eggs "bugs"?

Alan Hake,
Bucksburn, Aberdeen

No plans for a home version of Punch Out. *My guess is that Coleco will produce one, bearing in mind Coleco's links with Nintendo.*

Don't wait for the 7800, as it is now an ex-system. VCS cartridges can't run on anything other than a VCS or Coleco expansion module 2.

We call eggs "eggs" because they are different from bugs. Eggs are intentional special features in a game. They have been put there deliberately by the programmer. Bugs are unintentional glitches in the program.

The term eggs comes from the Americans and their tradition of hunting for eggs at Easter time. The programmers hide something in the game for gamers to find in much the same way.

GAMING IN IRELAND

As I write, I am on holiday in Ireland. Let me tell you about the arcade and computer scene here.

As far as computers go, I haven't seen many around. There are a few Commodore and Oric 1 machines – but no prices on them.

I expect they are very expensive like everything else. *TV Gamer* costs £1.41!

The arcades are good. They have most of the new machines, and quite a lot of the machines cost only 10p a game. They have all the regulars: *Donkey Kong*, *Centipede*, *Galaxians*, *Tempest*, *Frogger*, *Asteroids* and *Defender*.

In one pub, I played *Circus Charlie* at 20p a go. Strangely enough, I haven't seen Atari's *Pole Position* anywhere.

I saw games which I haven't seen in the UK. One is *Cat and Mouse*, a *Pac-Man* type game. This involves moving around the screen opening and shutting doors, eating objects and avoiding dogs and other ferocious animals.

Another game was *Attack*, which is just a shoot 'em up game. It shows a map of the world where France flashes red and you get a report of what's attacking.

You have a set time in which to blast your enemy, otherwise the Mirv will be launched. (I don't know what the Mirv is as I always finished on time).

On each different country there is quite good scenario. For example, in France you have the Eiffel Tower and the Arc de Triomphe.

Trevor O'Grady,
London SE2

Atari has signed deals with Irish Arcades in the republic and Caffola in Northern Ireland to distribute its arcades games. They should be up and running now. So Pole Position *has probably made it to Ireland.*

LUCKY PRODUCT?

Could you review Intellivision's computer, Lucky, in a future issue of *TV Gamer*. What does the future hold for this new company?

L Sermann, Glasgow

It's very difficult to review a computer which has no software. This is the problem we face with Intellivision's 'Lucky' keyboard. One or two software titles have emerged from Mattel, but we've not received them for review.

Who can say what the future will hold for Mastergames?

NO IMPORT

Back in issue two in the section on controllers, you mention a device called a Y splitter which allows two joysticks or devices to be plugged into one port. Could you tell me who makes them and also the approximate price.

In the June issue, John Fareham mentions a memory expander for the Coleco. You did not verify this but I can. I saw it on the back of a Colecovision box in Austria when I was scouting around for prices. It was described as a Super Game Module which accepted over 1,000,000 bits of information. Keep up the good work.

James Briginshaw

The Super Game Module you describe will not emerge here or in the US. It was an early idea which met with little enthusiasm among the US trade. Sorry to disappoint you: Coleco has put all its resources into the Adam, which is capable of "super games".

Consumer Electronics of Manchester did announce one of these Y splitters this time last year and, indeed, they exist in the States. But it did not appear this side of the Atlantic.

NEW GAMES

I own a Colecovision and four carts including *Turbo*. When the laser disc player is available, how much will it cost? Will *Dragon's Lair* and *Space Ace* be made for it?

Is Atari making *Pole Position* for the CBS system?

Has Parker released *Mr Do's Castle* for Colecovision?

I'd like to see a Top Score feature for arcade games.

Darren Ithell, Merseyside

The laser disc attachment won't be released in the US until next year, so we probably won't see it until Christmas 1985. Dragon's Lair and Space Ace are obviously hot contenders for the laser disc attachment, but a non-laser version of Dragon's Lair is scheduled for release in the near future. This may mean that Coleco is hedging its bets.

Atari is not planning to bring any games out for the Colecovision. Parker should be releasing Mr Do's Castle before Christmas.

Please send in your top arcade scores and we'll see what we can do.

THE GREEK GAMES

In response to your request for letters about arcade games abroad, I thought I would tell you about the arcades I visited in Crete.

The first arcade I saw was on the sea-front. It was totally unlit. I went back at night, and again the only light came from the screens. Whether there was a power failure or this was just for effect, I don't know. But it made the games seem clearer.

They mostly had the old favourites, *Asteroids*, *Space Invaders* (called *Earth Attack*) and *Pac-Man*. The newest game was *Track and Field* – for the first time I managed to get past the high jump, so perhaps the lack of light helps!

Another arcade I visited was in town. All the machines were up against one wall in a small shop. It had about twenty games, including *Defender*, and all those previously mentioned. This place seemed to be a hang-out for teenagers who sit and watch the other gamers when their own money runs out.

Track and Field was by far the most popular game with a queue of some thirty people lining up for a go on the one machine.

The arcade scene in Crete is popular but there is a lack of new games. No *Dragon's Lair*, no *Zaxxon* – even no *Pole Position*! Indeed, I didn't see a single driving game which could flag interest.

A nice feature in one arcade was a nightly competition to find the highest score from all the players. The game changes each night, and on the *Defender* night I came third with 85,000. All winners get a prize which appeared to change each night.

All in all, Crete has a fair old arcade scene and some nice ideas to make gaming that little bit more interesting.

Rob Naylors, Basildon, Essex

US LOOKS AT SPECTRUM

I think your magazine is well presented and interesting. The covers of the magazines always catch my attention in the local newsagent.

I have had my Spectrum for two and a half years now. But until recently I haven't been interested in serious game playing.

My change of mind was caused by rumours that companies like Atari, Parker, US Gold and Sega were going to bring out games for the Spectrum. Please could you tell me what games are available and when, as I have been told so many stories and lies!

Mark O'Hara, Morden, Surrey

None as yet, but titles have been promised. Check future issues for reviews.

CHEAP ATARI

I am writing to find out when the new *3D Star Wars* is coming out for the VCS. I have already mastered the others – such as *Death Star Battle* – and think these games are just brilliant!

I would like to know if the Atari games will be cheaper in the future. Other games are being copied for computers like Acorn's Electron, and being sold at a much lower price.

Mitchell Green, Coleshill, Birmingham

Star Wars – the arcade game should be available before Santa packs up his sleigh.

Atari games have already dropped significantly in price to about £10. Isn't that cheap enough for you?

NO PIRACY

Re my letter in the September issue of *TV Gamer* – and your reply – I wouldn't dream of getting involved in piracy. Indeed, it is the very enemy of loyal gamers such as myself.

If programs get copied in abundance, software companies will soon stop writing great games, because they will lose money. It's as simple as that!

Michael Lynch, Liverpool, Merseyside

There is obviously a lot of truth in what you say, and if you got the impression that I was getting at you then I apologise. But you must admit that you're in a minority who feel this way about copying games. Many ads in other magazines (particularly the classifieds) are the selling platform for small-time pirates calling themselves software exchange groups.

GAME PAWS APPEARS ON PAGE 66

EASTER-EGGS

MINING UPWARDS

While I was playing on CBS Coleco's *Miner 2049er* I found an easter egg. When I reset the machine I tried pressing some numbers on the keypad: #64453##. I found that I went on to the eleventh layer. If you press #6453#2 you will go on to the second layer.

Jon Keeling, Cannock, Staffs

STICK IT TO THE ENEMY

I am writing to tell you that I have found some bugs on a number of my cartridges. For example, on VCS *Popeye* I have found a way of making Brutus walk through the wall on level one.

First of all, catch ten or more hearts and get killed. Immediately after you re-appear, run down to the spinach; you don't have to punch it. Brutus should be running towards you. He will jump up in the air looking for you on the top platform, but will not find you. So he will run over to where you are – but will not catch you. This is a safe spot.

After that, he will turn and run to the wall on the right-hand side. Meanwhile, move away from where you are standing. Brutus will walk through the wall and come out the other end, getting stuck for a moment or two.

I have also found a bug on *Dig Dug* which enables you to strip sheets.

And did you know about the bullet that can't kill you on *Phoenix*?

Brian Bell, Dunmurry, Belfast

PRIGHTPULLY PUNNY BUGS

I have discovered a bug in *Lady Bug* (pun?) on the Colecovision. This is on game number five which is a two-player version of game number one.

When player one is several screen levels ahead of player two, strange things start to happen in the bug box.

Among such things as flashing numbers and wrongly coloured vegetables (unripe green tomatoes) I found – well, I'm at a loss as to how to describe it! What on earth is it?

It seems to have propeller-type antennae, similar to Lady Bug's own. Every attitude Lady Bug takes is copied by the thing in the bug box.

Stephen L Weightman, Belper, Derby

AMSOFT'S FIRST TRICK?

The computer is new, and not many people own one. But I have found a clever trick on the Amstrad's *Harrier Attack* game.

Once loaded, select your skill level. My trick will work on any level. Take off from the ship and accelerate to full speed. Then lower your plane to sea level – carefully!

Wait until the first ship comes along. It should fire a missile at you. Once its missile is about two or three spaces away, fire at it. The timing is vital – if you shoot too early, your missile will not destroy it.

Once you are clear of its missile, hold down your missile button. Your aircraft will shoot straight through the ship, leaving only flames behind you. You will gain 2,010 points just for that.

Another hint – save your bombs for the city. And, whilst on land, fly low. The enemy radar can't pick you up, so reducing enemy harriers.

Kenneth Murfitt, Crawley, West Sussex

WIZARD!

I have found an egg in Superior Software's *Mr Wiz* for the Electron. If you hold down Escape and press Space once, you can flick through each scene to the scene you want to play. But you must release Escape on the scene before the one you want to play.

Did you know Escape is also used to restart a game?

Also, don't use the *FX210.1 command to turn the sound off, because the game won't work.

Paul Joels, Chinnok, Oxon

R DRACONS

I have found an easter egg in the VCS game *Phaser Patrol*.

I had loaded side B of the cassette and pressed down the reset switch about ten times. Then I switched to the front view screen after warp-hopping to a dracon-infested area.

After this I was confronted by dracons that looked like dotted lines in the distance. When they came closer the dots seemed to form into a letter R. Could this be an initial?

This has happened only once and I am trying to make it appear again.

James Pocknell, Wing, Beds

MORE ON VCS

I thought I would write to tell you about some of the bugs I have found on my Atari 2600.

On *Pac Man*, the new sheet that came up was darker. But, more surprisingly, the power pill was off centre; it was one square to the right of normal.

Another time, I ate a power pill and, to my delight and shock, it would not stop working and kept going. I naturally chased and ate all the ghosts and dots. Then I ate another pill but it only lasted the normal time and the game was back to normal (pity).

On *Wizard of Wor* you will sometimes hear a noise after the game is just over – usually made by one of your men as he is eaten.

On *Zaxxon*, in a two-player version, you will sometimes see the sign 1/2. Then the player is immediately killed – you don't even see how it happens. The next player plays on just a second or two after being killed.

If you press game select during the game, it freezes. Pity you cannot play on through! Also, if you press game select during a game any shots fired will continue to travel.

In my favourite game, *Battlezone*, I have found a small bug.

I was playing the game normally and got myself in a situation where a tank was directly in front of me and another directly behind me.

Both the enemy tanks fired at me at the same time. The one in front hit me and, just as I was being destroyed, I saw the shot from the tank behind go through and hit the tank in front of me.

Alan Blair, Ballymoney, Co Antrim

HOW TO PLAY FOREVER

Here are interesting tricks on arcade games.

Asteroids: make rocks pass through you. Sit in the lower left corner of the screen, as far as you can get without disappearing. Rotate and fire. The rocks will pass through you and bullets won't touch you. This works on old machines only.

Crystal Castles: score 140,000 bonus points. On wave one run around the left side to the back of the structure and hit the jump button.

Dig-Dug: making a round last all day! Kill all the monsters except one. Stop the last monster two spaces under a rock, and hold him there by pumping just enough to freeze him. Then

EASTER-EGGS

dig up under the rock, pumping the monster as you pass through him.

When you hit the rock, reverse down inside the monster and turn away. Quickly run around and explode the monster just before the rock hits him. Thus the monster is killed twice. The game will not advance to the next round until either you get the fruit or kill Dig-Dug under a rock.

Donkey Kong Jr: how to get unlimited lives. Play two players. Play the first player normally until you die. When the second player starts, move Jr to the far right side of the starting platform with one foot completely off the edge. You must be able to jump straight up without grabbing the vine.

Wait until the blue trap comes down the apple vine. When it reaches the bottom, jump! You must hit the water the same time the trap does. The screen will go blank and then read 'PLAYER ONE'. Now player one will have the same score and number of men, but will have returned to level one.

How to slow the game to a snail's pace. On the first screen climb up both vines at the start up to the top of the screen. If you continue holding the joystick up, everything slows considerably until you release the joystick. Whilst not very useful, this trick is quite comical.

Defender: how to stop the action. To freeze the screen on *Defender*, you must get all the humanoids underneath you, and then put them all on the planet's surface. As long as you keep your fingers off the thrust button the game stays still. When you press thrust the game starts playing again.

Galaga: make all the bugs stop dropping bombs for the entire game. On the first screen, shoot all the aliens except for the bug on the bottom left side. For the next five to twenty minutes let it fly around while you dodge the bombs. It will then stop shooting. Let it pass by four times and shoot it. . .

Joust: score over 200 million points. On wave six, joust all the knights except one. Let this one get caught by the lava troll. Position yourself on the bottom floating rock or platform. The pterodactlyes will start coming out. Simply face the direction they come from, and they will run into your lance every time. You can build up over 1,000 extra men. NB: Again, this works on old machines only.

The sneaky gap trick: on *Joust* there are the two lower right hand ledges. They are both at slightly different heights. If you land on the lower ledge of the two without putting your feet down, you can slide along the ledge; instead of bouncing off the higher one, you fall through the gap.

Jack The Giant Killer: win ninety-nine free games. Although a rare game this is an interesting bug. You simply jump on Jack's house and keep jumping until you die. Some machines have been modified, but you may be lucky.

Millipede: get 795,000 bonus points. This one is for pros only! When your score reaches 1,080,000 spin the Trakball. You will pick up anything from 15,000 to 795,000 points.

Ms Pac-Man: win sixty-four free games: This is for pros as well. You must be able to complete the 137th screen. Beware: this is like no other screen. All the characters will be right side up, but the maze will be upside down with all the dots are in the right places. Once this screen is cleared, 75% of the time sixty-five free games appear. It will also give you a borderless maze of dots.

Robotron: make tanks stop shooting fireballs. To stop a tank wave becoming too crowded, the Williams' designers made sure that a maximum of twenty fireballs could be on one screen at any one time. On any tank wave, let one tank fire twenty times. Each shot bounces off two walls and then disappears. When it disappears, it is not taken away from the total. So when the tank has shot twenty rounds the machine thinks that the maximum twenty balls are still on the screen. The tank will fire no more.

Ian Boffin

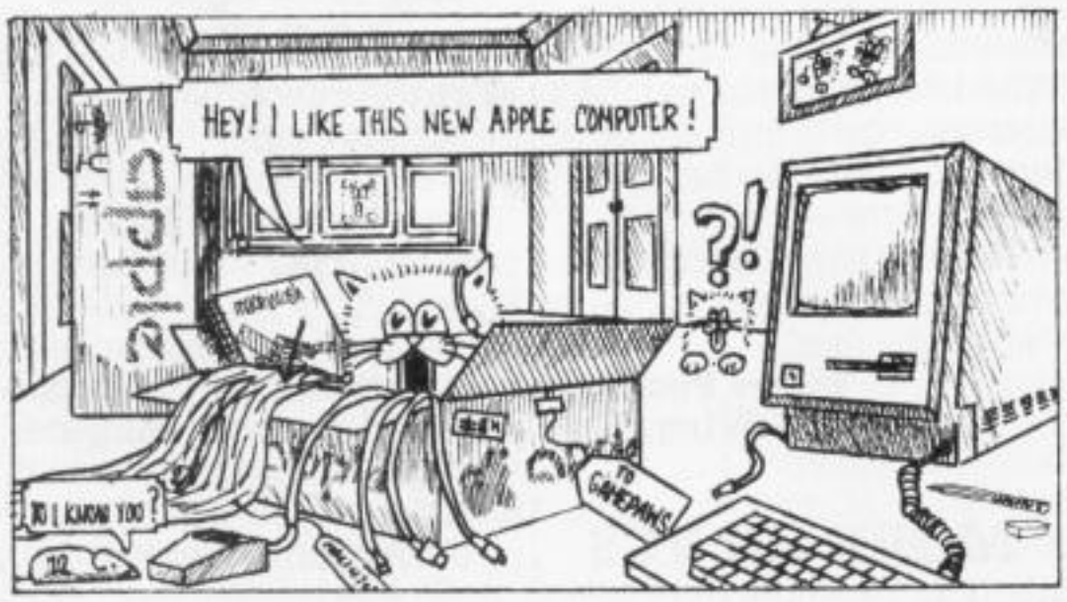
TV GAMER BANNED!

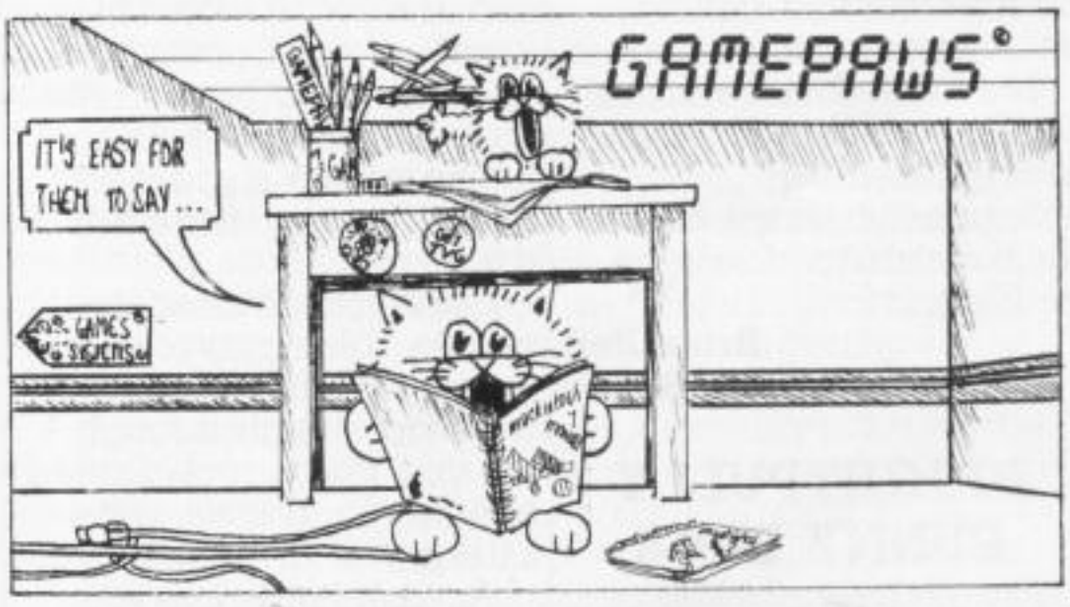
For anyone who plays *Mr Do* in the arcades, I have found an egg. If you dig into all four sides of a cherry it will turn into a strawberry.

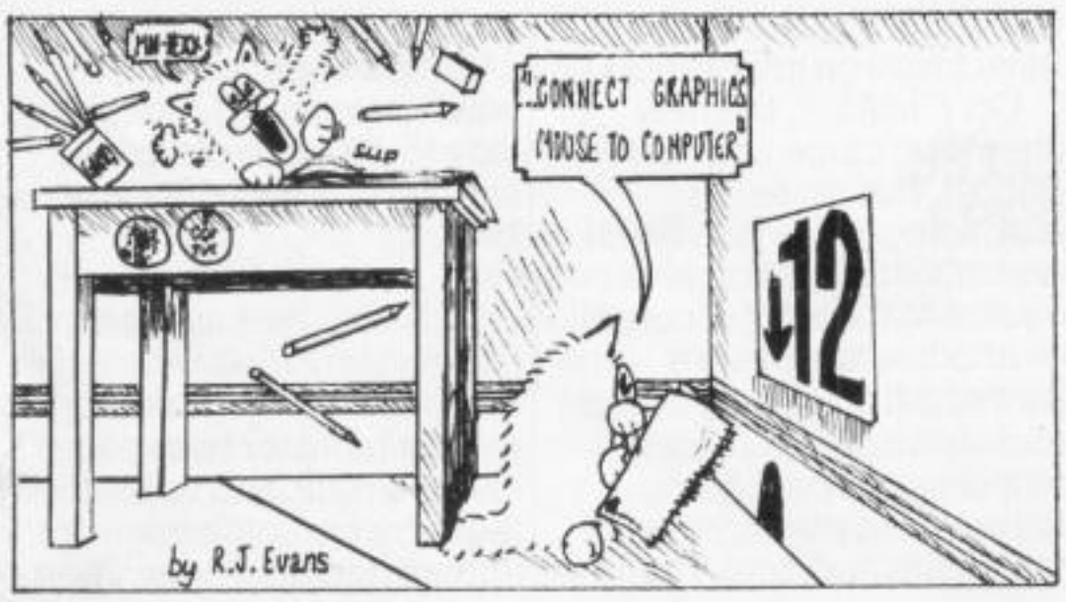
On *Cosmic Avenger* for Coleco, when your first plane appears, a tune plays. If you score over 10,000 without losing a life, the second time you begin a new plane the tune plays again.

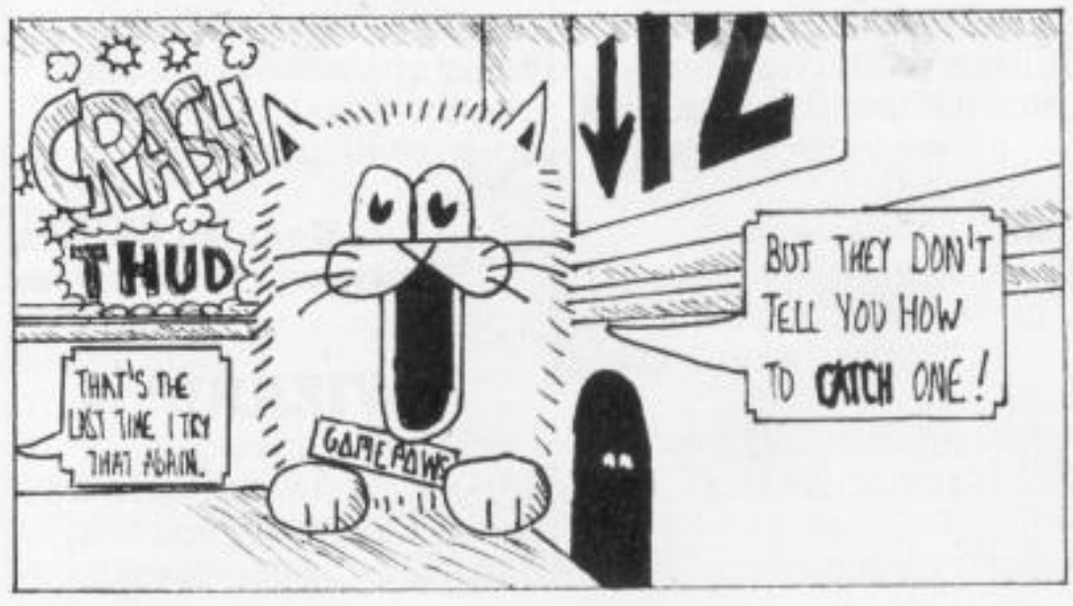
By the way, I have been banned from my local arcades because I am too good.

Darren Ithell, Merseyside





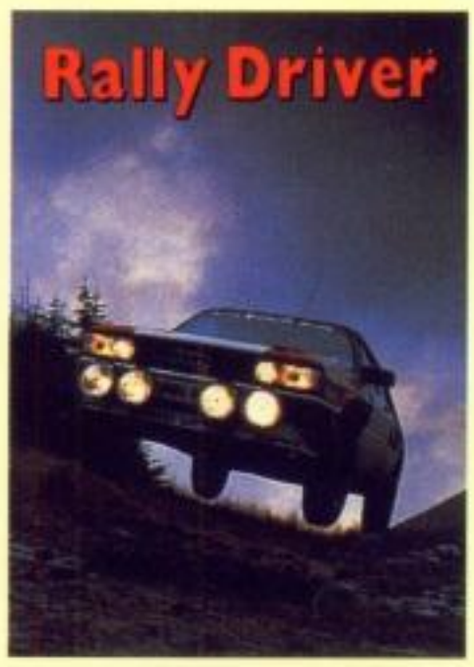


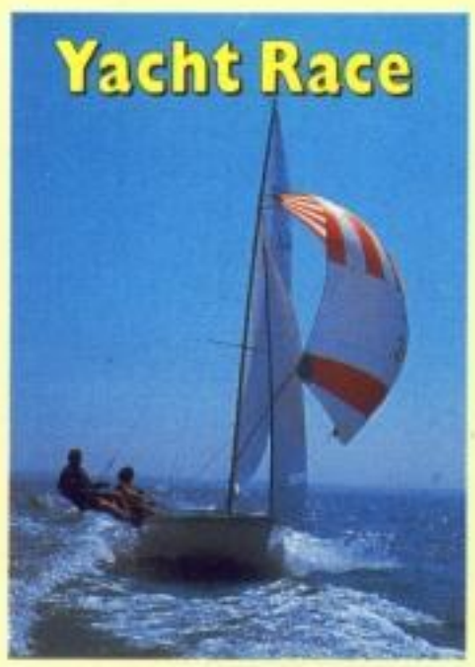


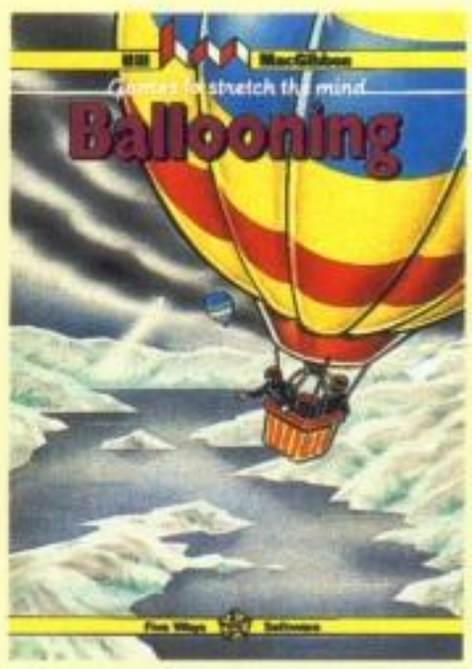
Hill MacGibbon

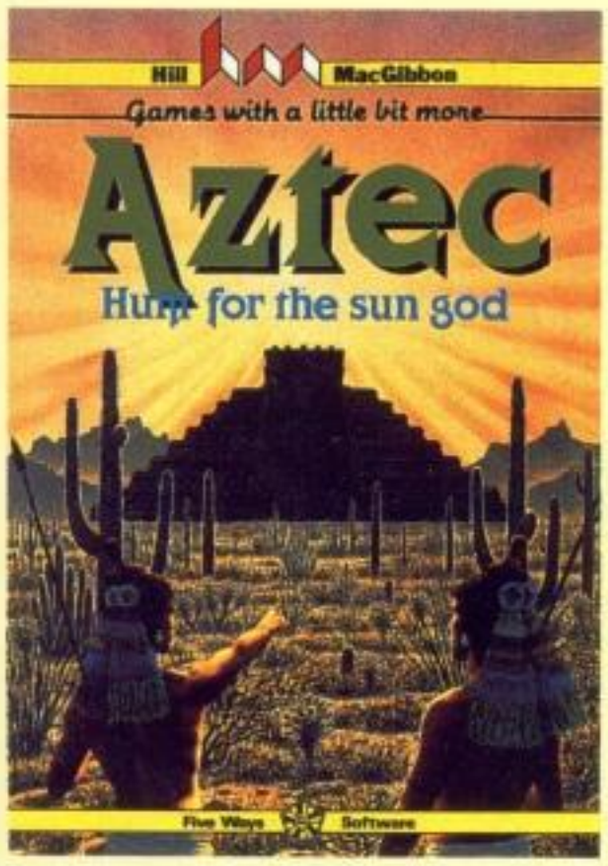
Games to stretch the mind

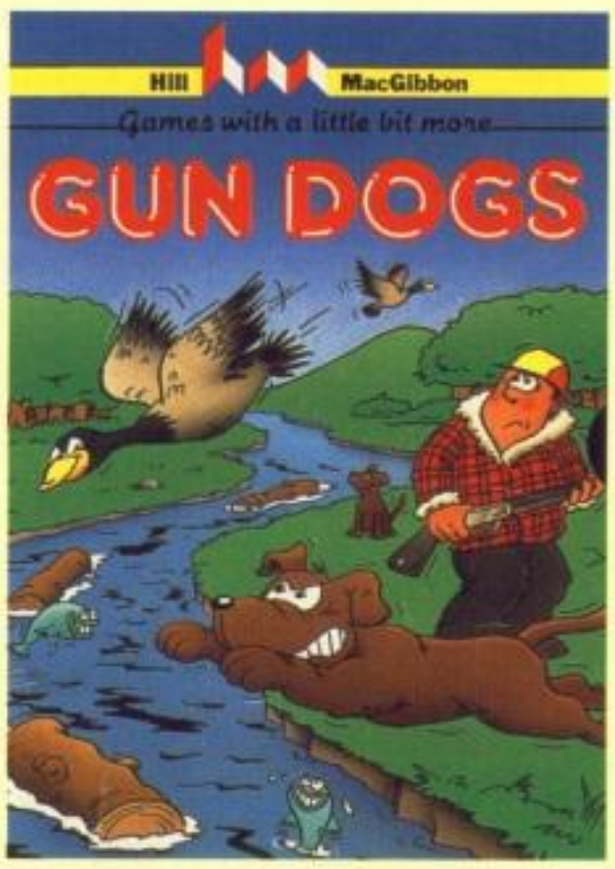
SOFTWARE THAT SETS NEW STANDARDS IN ENTERTAINMENT

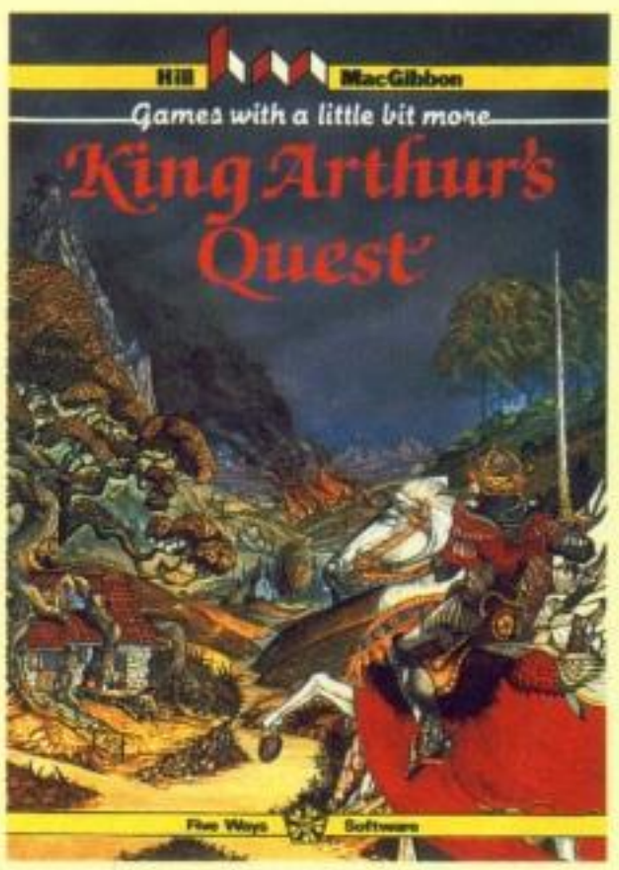


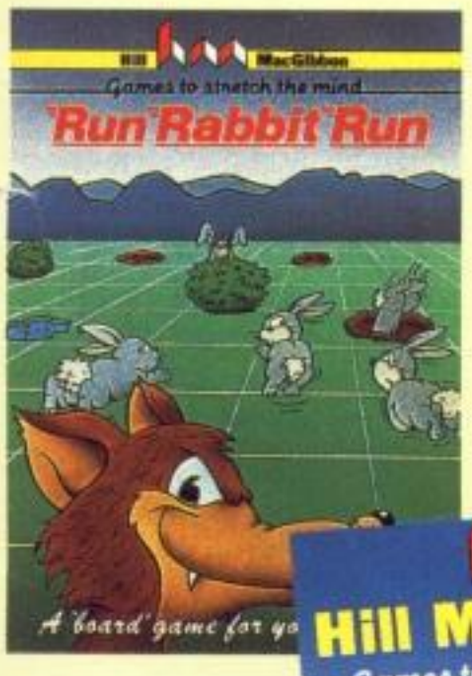


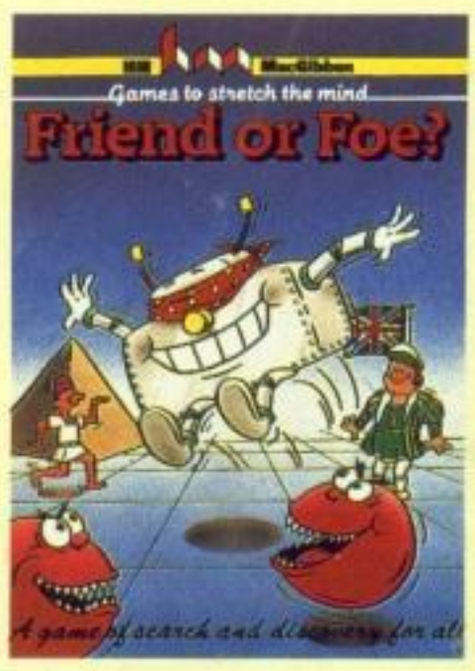


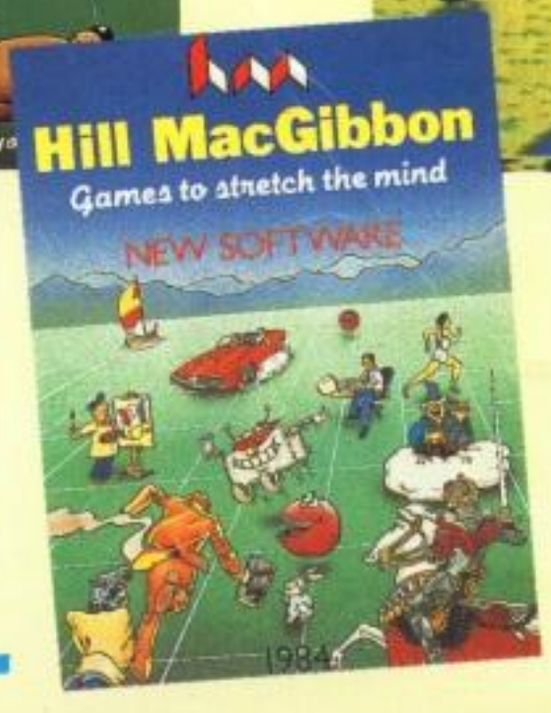












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